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BIRD LIFE IN
WASHINGTON

JENNIE V. GETTY



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JENNIE V. GETTY

BIRD LIFE IN WASHINGTON

Treating of the Birds of the State of
Washington, Their Songs and
Nesting Habits

With 20 Drawings by the Author and 42 Photographs

By
JENNIE V. GETTY
Author of
"LITTLE FRIENDS OF THE SNOW"



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PREFACE

The author's death occurred following the completion of this work. To make permanent her observations and with the hope that others may study and love the birds as she did, her relatives have caused "Bird Life in Washington" to be published.

Miss Getty's collection of bird eggs, drawings and photographs have been presented to the Washington State University and may be seen at the Museum. Her observations were made chiefly in the vicinity of Seattle, Tacoma, Kirkland and in the Snoqualmie Valley.

Her niece, Miss Georgia Allen, edited the manuscript and arranged the details of publication and wishes here to thank Mr. D. E. Brown, Mr. J. H. Bowles, Mr. W. L. Dawson and Mr. F. S. Hall for much kindly assistance and helpful suggestions.

INTRODUCTION

In the following pages, the aim has been to give the children a brief but working knowledge of the appearance of individual birds, the localities which these birds are most likely to frequent, their choice of home sites, and the language which they use.

With the help of parents and teachers, we would make the children so well acquainted with individual species that an injured bird will be to them an injured friend.

Can not the boy be made to understand the great service which the birds render not only to beauty and to music but to the growing crops! We have tried to enable him to judge Robin, not entirely by what the bird does in June, but by what he does during the entire year. Even the despised but greatly misunderstood Hawks and Owls should not be judged entirely by their rare visits to the farm yard.

A few suggestions may be helpful for bird study. In Washington, early in March, boxes may be made for tree swallows and blue birds. Farther south this work should be done earlier.

Love songs and nest building will continue from March until August.

Teachers must use much discretion in regard to showing nests to children under twelve. We have found that a large per cent of nests thus shown come to grief; not necessarily because of intentional harm to the nest, but the natural enthusiasm of the child makes him too familiar. We are aware that some may take exception to this but we can assure them that we are recording facts obtained through long experience.

During August and September the birds are gathering into flocks. They are preparing for their winter sports either here or in the South.

Walks through Birdland should be taken at least in April, May, June, September and October. The company should be small. Six is a large number.

When heavy snows come, children should be urged to scatter crumbs on window sills or on boards hung high enough that they are out of reach of the cat. When the snow is deep, the quail is in particular need of care. In places frequented by these birds, grain should be scattered. Some of the recollections that I most cherish, are those of kitchen window sills crowded with feasting sparrows, thrushes, and flickers on cold winter days.

JENNIE V. GETTY

Bird Life in Washington

THE WESTERN ROBIN

Two Robins' nests are in the low fir trees near my kitchen windows. This is the twenty-fifth of June and the parents have been carrying worms to their babies for several days. One is gathering within a few feet of me. He has five worms in his mouth and is still hunting. Were it not for his babies I should be tempted to let him gather for my fishhook.

This is probably the second family these birds have reared this season, for the Western Robin arrives early. Indeed many of them remain throughout the year.

He builds his nest of coarse grass stems, a few small sticks and some cord if he can get it. He lines it with fine grasses. The outside and the lining are plastered together with mud.

The nest is placed on the limb of an apple tree, fir tree, or cherry tree; close to the body of the tree or far out on the branches; high up or low down. Indeed the kind of a tree or the location in it, bothers Robin but very little. It is so

easy to find his home! he scarcely hides it at all.

Our most familiar bird egg is Robin's. The children have seen the four clear blue green eggs so often that their mental picture of a bird's nest contains four pretty blue eggs.

In spite of Robin's great appetite for



Photo by the Author

NEST AND EGGS OF WESTERN ROBIN

the juiciest, ripest cherries, he gets more than his share of love; he is so much in evidence that we all know him.

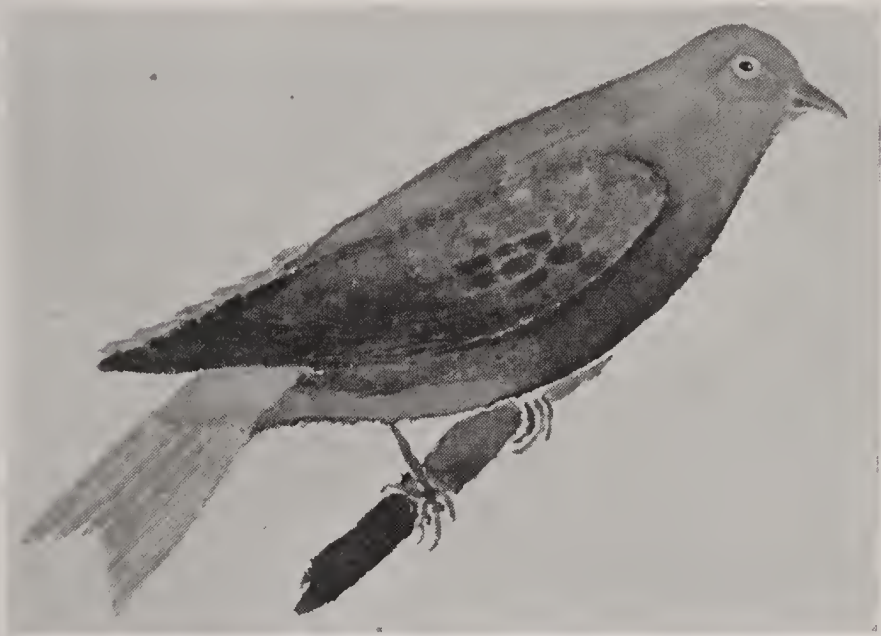
Mornings and evenings, from March until July, he sings "Cheer up, Cheer-er, cheer up, cheer up, cheer-er." If we approach too near to his home, he scolds almost as hard as Steller's Jay. He sings less, it is supposed, than his Eastern cousin—the American Robin.

WESTERN BLUEBIRD

You are lucky if you catch Western Bluebird singing his song of love. I had begun to think the nursery rhyme was teaching a myth: "I know the song that the bluebird is singing," it says.

I followed Bluebird many a season before I caught him voicing his love. Then to add a charm, if that were possible, to the ethereal music, he sang while he floated back and forth overhead.

The sun rose over the stately firs; the



WESTERN BLUEBIRD

dew drops sparkled like silver stars while the bird sang its greeting. I was so happy to be able to say in truth, "I know the song that the bluebird is singing," that his love notes rang in my ears for hours.

His song season is short. We may hear him talk almost any season. His conversational notes are sweet, too.

If the tree swallow does not drive him away, he is glad to find a box in the yard waiting for him.

Bluebirds come early and the mother bird may rear three sets of children. It has been known to lay six sets, but instances of this kind are rare. Each set consists of from four to six pale blue eggs.

If no welcome box awaits bluebird, he may seek an abandoned woodpecker hole far from any human habitation.

He is beautifully clothed in blue and rose. His manners are gentle and confiding. We welcome the joy he brings and are glad he is with us all the year.

Only a few sheltered valleys may know him in January, but I have met him quietly feeding on the shores of Lake Washington on the twenty-eighth day of December. By the twentieth of February they are fairly common again.

VARIED THRUSH

The Varied Thrush makes one think of the Robin. The two birds resemble each other in size, color and mannerisms. So Varied Thrush is often called Alaska Robin, Oregon Robin, or Swamp Robin. He is the more beautiful bird; his throat and breast are golden or orange; a bright

black crescent divides the orange of throat and breast; orange thumb marks deck his wings; and over his eye is a stripe of the same bright hue.

In the lowlands, Varied Thrushes are winter birds. The colder the winter the more common they are, for they come from the foothills for food. Although the Varied Thrush is more timid than Robin, these birds are sometimes found sporting together.

In February, March and April the Thrush enchants the listener with his single whistled note uttered in many keys.



Photo by the Author

NEST AND EGGS OF VARIED THRUSH

“E-e-e-k,” he says, sweet, solemn, and melancholy. Then he raises the key and makes the note sweeter and more pathetic; and then, as if impatient that he can

not make the poetry of his soul understood, he lowers the note, shortens it, and puts into it a tinge of impatience.

He throws back his head, opens his mouth wide, and sends forth a long tremulous whistle that thrills human ears a quarter of a mile away.

By a long path in the deep wood, I have found Mrs. Thrush upon the nest. It was an exceptionally beautiful, bulky affair of twigs and mosses lined with dried grasses. It was placed in a fir about fifteen feet from the ground. It is sometimes placed in cedars. In the lowlands, this nest is rare; we should go to the foothills to make the search more successful.

The eggs are much like Robin's eggs, save that they are sparingly spotted. There are very seldom more than three eggs in a nest.

If we approach too near when the parents are feeding the babies, they set up a terrible commotion. If they had known enough to be quiet, we would probably have seen neither parents nor babies.

RUSSET-BACKED THRUSH

Dear little Russet-backed Thrush is as common as Robin in summer. It is a little olive brown bird with a spotted breast.

He is a late comer but in June and July, the thickets fairly ring with his,

"Look up, spheral, spheral." His call note is a single whistle much like we give to Fido when we want him to prick up his ears. It is easy to imitate this. If you whistle to him, he'll answer from the thicket.

In choosing a location for a nest, most birds take three things into consideration: light, cleanliness, and safety. Their homes will be in open places, along paths, or water courses, but we may crawl through the heavy ferns of the deep woodland, or push our way through the thicket where it is too dense for ferns, fighting the dead branches from our eyes at every move. Here we may flush Russet-back.



Photo by the Author

NEST AND EGGS OF RUSSET-BACKED THRUSH

The nest may be fastened to a fragile bracken fern, or it may be twenty feet up

in a fir. It is made of almost anything Russet-back can find. The most common materials are grass, stems and mosses with dried leaves for the lining.

If we find the nest in June there will probably be four eggs in it, if in July three may be a complete set. The eggs are greenish blue spotted all over with brown or blue.

Russet-back is a typical thrush with the olive brown back and the spotted breast.

We have other thrushes less common than he, which resemble him in size and color. They are the Hermit Thrushes. They are practically silent with us. "Mountain angels," they have been aptly called. I have met them in the ravines of the mountains and as I sank reverently to my knees to listen to the matchless singers, I felt as though the soul of a mountain hermit were breathing an inestimably sweet prayer to the angels. The sturdy Alaskan goes to the foot hills to listen while he pities us to whom the heavenly music is usually denied.

OREGON TOWHEE

Hopping over the brakes and brush piles almost any time of day, and any season of the year, is a beautiful dark bird sometimes called the ground robin.

Bonnet and cape, back, wings and tail are black save for the white thumb marks

on wings and tail. These white spots show beautifully in flight. He wears a very becoming apron, the front of which is white and the sides rufous.



OREGON TOWHEE NEST AND EGGS

He holds his tail curved gracefully upwards as he trips over the brush. In the spring he may sit quietly for an hour with tail hanging while he trolls over his name. "Tow hee, tow hee." But on the bushes, he flirts with us a moment, flashing his red eye at us; then disappears. We may still hear his rather good natured scold from among the bushes. "Ank, ank, a-n-k," he says. It sounds like puss begging for milk. For that reason Towhee is sometimes called the Catbird. He is not the Catbird. In fact he has named himself.

He can trill, and he can sing. His trill pours from his throat like a tiny cascade.

But all who love music should hear his June song—his song of his happy home: “Ptsee, pee, pee, cheeree. Cheeree, pee, pee, prsee.” He may sing his song forward or backward or cut it in two in the middle.

I have seen him so wild with love that he forgot that I was near and might grab him.

His home is on or near the ground. Every western child may know the Oregon Towhee. He is common and he is with us all the year.

He belongs to the Finches and Sparrows—the great family of seed eaters.

RUSTY SONG SPARROW

Next to Robin, if not before him, the Rusty Song Sparrow claims our love. Not because of his beauty, for he is decidedly plain in color. He is just a little brown bird with head striped gray and brown.

I have known him to be mistaken for a wren. He need not be, for although his tail is perked up, his wings and tail are not barred, and he has the short, thick sparrow bill.

In the variety of his songs, he almost equals Seattle Wren who is constantly surprising us with a new composition. While Robin takes a lofty position to

whistle his: "Cheer-up, cheer-er," little Rusty is satisfied with a twig of a brush pile to pour forth his joy.

Almost any bird, not excepting the Jay, sings during the home building season, but Rusty Song Sparrow's song season lasts from January to January. In sunshine, in rain, or in snow, he gladdens us with his melodies of life and freedom: "A-we, a-we, a-wa, chi, chi, chi, chi, sweet, sweet," or "chip, chip, ya, chip, wurt-a, sweet, sweet," or "chip, chip, ya, where's she, hu, hu, hu, hu," or "whu, whu, whu, whu, wh-e-e, uh, uh, uh, uh, uh, whoit, whoit."

Just part the low bushes any time from April 15 to July 15 and there nestled from one to three from the ground is his home.



Photo by Author

NEST AND EGGS OF RUSTY SONG SPARROW

NUTTALL SPARROW

In this busy part of the world, many a sweet strain of music is scarcely heard. At least it is true that few pause to trace a song to the singer. A chorus of music may fill the air. The world seems brighter but most of us get no farther than the thought: "The birds are singing!" Be they wrens, finches, or thrushes, we are too bushy to determine. Little Nuttall is an exception. He is heard and heeded. From early morn until eleven at night we may hear his "We-e, a-nch-y, hitchy, hitchy, hitcha." After the day's work is done, his sweet strains catch the ear, and



NUTTALL SPARROW

we wonder, "Who is our serenader!" He has earned for himself the title, "The Nightingale of the West."

He is a summer bird, arriving by the last of March or the first of April. He announces his presence at once from the

tops of the brakes or from the branches of the low firs.

The nest may be found in May or June upon the ground or low in the bushes. It is easily found. And has three or five green blue eggs in it. We may flush the mother bird from the nest in the corner of the yard. For this daring, the bird pays a heavy toll to the cat.

Nuttall is large for a sparrow. His color is gray. On wings and back, there is brown mixed with the gray. Black and white stripes adorn his head. His wing bars are white.

GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW

During the last part of April and first of May, Golden-Crowned Sparrow visits us. He is a small greyish brown bird with the golden crown between two black lines which gives him his name.

Their conversation sounds like "enk, enky," or sometimes "oo'ee."



GOLD-CROWNED SPARROW

Having paid us their spring visit they go on north. There they raise their families then call again in September on their way to southern winter quarters.

WESTERN SAVANNA SPARROW

You are most apt to find Western Savanna Sparrows on the tide flats, though they have been found on upland meadows. They are modest brown and grey birds striped in a 12 radiating pattern.

They usually nest in colonies of half a dozen pairs. You may look for the nest in May or June in grassy spots and count yourself lucky if you find it.

These sparrows' shyness makes them very hard to study. When you are walking through the salt marshes you may flush them but they will zigzag at once for the nearest cover.

Their song reminds you of a grasshopper in its, "Ptsip, ptsip, se-e, e-e-e-e."



WESTERN SAVANNA SPARROW

WILLOW GOLDFINCH

We have so many kinds of finches and sparrows that it takes years to get acquainted with them all. One of the most gaily clad is the Willow Goldfinch. His dress is bright yellow, his wings black crossed by white bars. Then he wears a jaunty black cap.

He greets us with a sweet low warble in late spring. Some of the Goldfinches remain throughout the year, but if we have had our introduction to them in their gay summer clothes we shall need another one in order to know them in winter. A large number of ours are dressed much plainer in winter than in summer.

The Goldfinches sport in gay flocks in winter, but in late spring the pairs of tiny sweethearts steal away from the crowd.

Mr. Goldfinch is very attentive to his lady, if you see one you are almost certain to see the other. "How did you find the nest?" I asked a gentleman who reported having made a visit to it. "Why, I saw him alone, you know how closely they stick together, so I thought she must be on the nest and I began to hunt." The nest is usually placed near the top of a low tree. It should contain three or five blueish white eggs.

PINE SISKIN

Have we not all wondered who are those dainty tiny rovers moving in such larke flocks. There are from fifty to five hundred in one group. Their plumage is streaked grey and brown with yellow patches on wings and tail that show in flight.



Photo by W. L. Dawson
NEST AND EGGS OF PINE SISKIN

A little child said to me one day : "I saw hundreds of tiny birds this morning. There were so many, I could hardly see the sky through them." Their tiny fluttering wings make me think of a musical instrument with a thousand keys in motion.

The flocks may be seen during any month of the year, but they are very much in evidence from October to Febru-

ary when the alder cones are hanging full of seeds.

An alder tree is often truly alive with these tiny sparrow colored citizens who, while they feast, keep up the loveliest chatter.

Pine Siskins travel in flocks except when building or taking care of a home. Any time during the spring or summer months, a pair may leave the main ranks, and choose a pretty curve high up on a limb of an alder tree for a home site.

The mother bird "sits close," as we say. That is, it is hard to drive her from the nest. I have thrown sticks at her for half an hour, while she sat quietly on the nest paying no heed to me.

I had no intention to hit the little wife, but I don't see how she knew it. She changes the position of her eggs every few minutes. When she hears her mate's voice, she is on the alert in an instant.

It is worth a visit to Birdland to see him feed her. She stretches up her bill and father bird puts her dinner into it.

CALIFORNIA PURPLE FINCH

When we first meet the Purple Finch we look in vain for the purple in his costume. His colors vary from madder red to madder pink. He is not so handsome in his younger days. Then he is striped like a sparrow.

Like many Washington birds, the purple finches are only partially migratory. They are scarce in winter and, unless we watch closely we may see them but seldom then.

While not entirely silent during the cold months, their song is seldom heard



CALIFORNIA PURPLE FINCH

until early spring. So when their rich loud trill comes to us from the orchard, we greet them as new comers.

It is almost impossible to translate Purple Finches song into words but the ear, once accustomed to it, seldom forgets

it. He has a call which he gives from the tops of the firs which we may put into words, "Joey, come here." "Joey, Joey come here!" he says.

In April Purple Finch is certain to be in the cherry trees when they are white with blossoms. What is he doing up there? He is picking off the blossoms, the little scamp! He picks off the entire blossom, extracts the honey and drops the rest.

There are usually a number of little blossom pickers in the same tree. The ground soon appears as if covered with snow. It is often so thickly covered that our Nature Study Classes forget the birds and gather up handfulls shouting: "Play snow ball!" The chickens pick up the blossoms, but the birds renew the white carpet just as often until the trees are past bloom. It truly seems as though there could be no cherries upon that tree. One is very much tempted to chase the little red workers out of the tree and yet they are really doing good.

We watched the trees that appeared to be the birds favorites for years and we find them well filled with most excellent cherries.

A tree produces a great many more blossoms than it should mature as cherries. This culling is of advantage; the fruit is larger and better.

THE BLACKHEADED GROSBEAK

Late May brings to the fir encircled lowlands one of the finest singers upon the Pacific Coast. Who can listen to him and lament the loss of eastern birdsongs! From the tops of the tall firs, clear and penetrating, he sends forth his whistled swinging rhythm: "Sweet, he-ro, sweet, he-ro, wh-e-e-e spirit, hu, hu, hu, hu." "Greet, you, greet, you, you." Listen to him, boys. High class as his music is, his notes are so distinct that we may whistle his song, too.

He is generous with his voice. If you come near the place he loves at any time of day, you are almost certain to hear him. I have stood in the marsh for hours in the rain listening to this artist. Again I have

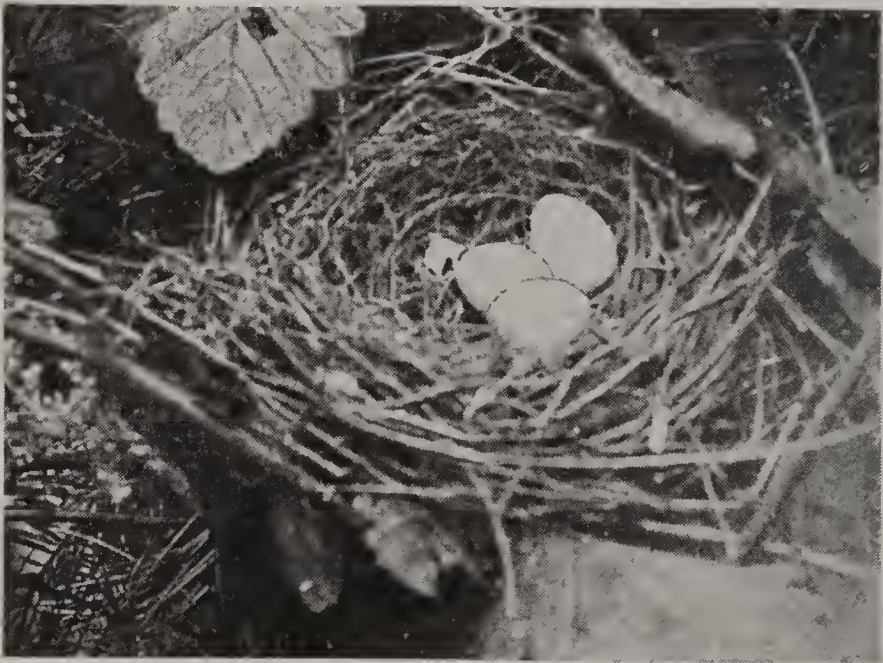


Photo by the Author

NEST AND EGGS OF BLACKHEADED GROSBEAK

gone into the woods to study some rare bird but Grosbeak called me out of my way and made me listen. Fortunately, these fine singers are growing more common every year.

They nest in the spireae and salmon-berry bushes, and the male bird, artist though he is, does not disdain work. In the absence of his mate, he sits upon the nest singing all the while as though work were fun. An artist need not be an architect. Grosbeak certainly is not.

The nest is a firm one but so loosely woven that we may look up and see the eggs through it.

Blackheaded Grosbeak is richly clad in black, orange, and white. In size he is a little smaller than Robin.

WESTERN EVENING GROSBEAK

In winter these beautiful birds are common in parks. They are brilliantly dressed in greenish yellow, have golden crowns and white wing patches. Their call is striking. It may be a high shriek "Imp," an alarm note from the bird on watch, or a soft whisper to each other.

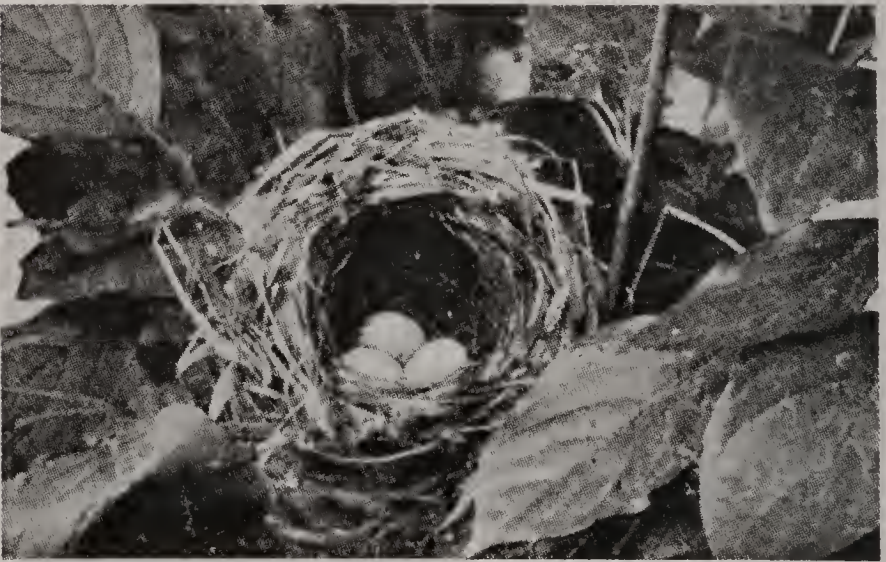
Their song is considered most beautiful by the favored few who have heard it. But they sing only in forests at nesting time.

They feed on seeds and buds of trees, especially maple buds, and are very fond of caterpillars.

LAZULI BUNTING

A dainty bunch of cerulean blue, black, white, and brownish rose, is the Lazuli Bunting. His hood and cape are blue, his sides rose chestnut and his underparts and wing bars white.

Even the rich colors of the Bluebird are outrivaled by those of this tiny Finch. Before you know him well, you will often wonder whether you are listening to a Finch or a Warbler. Both bird and voice appear small for a Finch and large for a Warbler.



Taken near Spokane

Photo T. S. Merrill

A LAZULI BUNTING'S NEST

He makes a pretty picture as he spreads his dainty wings before his brood warning it of danger. When they fly, he follows them to a place of safety. Lazuli Bunting is usually a late comer. His home is among the bushes and grasses near water.

WARBLERS

Summer brings many tiny yellow birds. In color, at least, many of them remind us of our canary. For this reason, they are falsely called "Wild Canaries." Their bills are much more slender than our pet bird and most of them are smaller than he. Canary is a Finch. As a musician, he ranks much higher than the Warblers. But they are such active, cheerful little beings, and their, "Chee, chee, chee," with variations, according to the species, just must be shaken out for their tiny throats are full to over-flowing. They may sing every few seconds from morning until evening. So many species resemble each other so much and Warblers are so active that it is often difficult to tell just what species is flitting in and out among the leaves.

Should we be lucky enough to find a Warbler home and sit down by it, the tiny parent though in motion will manage to keep a bunch of leaves between us and it.

It is not always the surest way to trace birds by their color, but it is often the quickest way. Yellow is the prevailing Warbler color.

CALIFORNIA YELLOW WARBLER

The Warbler that reminds us most of Canary is California Yellow Warbler, a bright little golden thing with tiny orange streaks down throat and breast. His wife is bright olive green.

By the last of April we should hear California Yellow Warbler's "chee, chee, chizawee." His home is about the only Warbler home that is easy to find. It is deep, cup-shaped, and placed in open bushes where the limbs fork. Just search the bushes near water for Warbler homes.

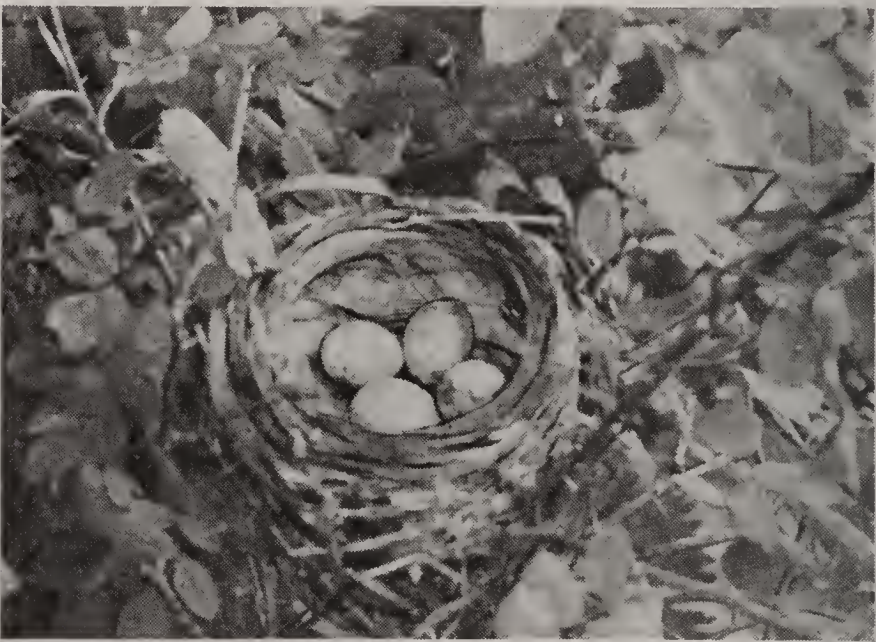


Photo by the Author

NEST OF CALIFORNIA YELLOW WARBLER

AUDUBON WARBLER

Our favorite Warbler is the Audubon. He is very richly dressed and what is more, he is truly western.

His general color is gray but his wings and tail are adorned with white; his breast is black; and his crown, throat, and rump are golden. On either side, beautifully set in gray and black, are two golden spots.

In March little Audubon appears in his wedding dress, singing his wedding song. His is the first Warbler song of the season.

We often find in early spring a flock of these birds flitting over the alders and cottonwoods. They are not looking for home sites there. They are just getting their dinner. Their building territory is not alders.

Sometime in April, if you are sharp eyed, you may find Audubon's home saddled on a limb of a fir tree. Don't meddle, don't touch, he'll be almost certain to leave the nest if you do. Warblers are very sensitive to any meddling. Sometimes merely looking into the nest, if he sees you do it, is enough to make him leave his home.

M'GILLIVERAY WARBLER

McGilliveray's Warbler though shy and hard to watch is one of our most common Warblers. You should watch for his coming in May.

His back and tail are an olive grey,

head and throat slate grey and underparts are yellow.

The nests are not easily found but if when you approach a clump of vines or shrubbery the bird slips quietly out and begins eating rather conspicuously in nearby bushes it should make you suspicious.

If you do find it, it will be a loose built affair made of grasses and rootlets, perhaps lined with horse hair. It should have four eggs in it.

McGilliveray's Warbler sings "chee, chee, cherrie."



PACIFIC YELLOW THROAT

PACIFIC YELLOW THROAT

Down in the swamps in Maytime you may hear "Witchity, witchity, witch-it-y." If you watch closely you will see the small greenish bird with his bright yellow vest and black mask. His wife looks like him but wears no mask. He turns his quaint little face towards you as he scrambles away through the underbrush and marsh grass.

The nest is very well hidden in a clump of grass and you may hunt and hunt and then find it by accident when you have given up hope. Then Yellow Throat will scold at you "Quit, quit, quit." The nest is made of grass and should contain four brown speckled eggs.

You may know when the tiny birds are there by the storm of "Quits" that an intruder causes.

Yellow Throat is a devoted parent and hunts endlessly for worms and insects. He swallows them himself first and then feeds the babies this partly digested food. The parent birds share the work of feeding.

THE LONG-TAILED CHAT

How different the birds are! How easy it is to believe that the one at which we are looking is the most interesting of all.

Children, I am often impatient with myself because I can't picture the won-

derful songs and actions of the birds so that you may see them as I have. You'll have to go to the woods and marshes and enjoy the birds for yourselves. There's a whole world of knowledge and fun in it.

My first and best visits with the Chat were on the banks of the Columbia River where the river cuts its way through the mountains. Here on a ledge of rock 400 feet above the river valley, I used to sit for hours and listen to this unwarbler like warbler. He took possession of a dead shrub 300 feet below me. He was more interesting to me than a whole brass band. Shall you wonder when I tell you that he can sing like a thrush, pipe like a squirrel, bark like a puppy, and scold like a jay?

He is much larger than most other warblers. He is about the size of the Oregon Towhee. He is unlike most warblers in the variety of his songs. Warblers usually have but one song or at most two. They may have an every day song and a love song.

Morning and evening, my chat was sure to be upon his particular stub at the foot of the bluff. From there he made occasional trips into the thicket, but he was always back in a moment at his music.

All this was pretty certain evidence, that in the thicket was a tiny tired wife, busy at her home making, and that she

was cheered and kept patient by our beautiful entertainer.

Of course we wanted to look into the home but we were afraid to search the side of that rocky bluff. The rocks were covered with briars, poison oak, pretty blue ceanothus, and white creamy syringa.

Here, too, on the bluff side, the rattle snake came out from under the rocks to bask in the sun.

We hunted, though, and at last we came upon a portion of the thicket which was so dense that we could not enter except at one place.



Photo by the Author

NEST AND EGGS OF LONG-TAILED CHAT

In the center of this enclosure was the prettiest, cleanest room; and there upon a limb about four feet from the ground

was the nest. It was made of grass stems and contained four white eggs spotted all over with lavender.

Don't suppose for a moment that Mr. Chat always sits upon a limb in plain sight. He usually does just the contrary. When he has had no little tired wife to cheer, I have tried for hours to get a glimpse of him in the thicket.

He would laugh at me, now on this side and now on that, while I could catch scarcely the flutter of a wing.

There was one thing that he did not hide, though, and that was his brass band music.

The Chat is rare in Washington west of the Cascades. Occasionally he comes from the eastern part of the state through the mountain passes.

Perhaps when the country is more thoroughly cleared of tall timber, we may convince him that the western part of the state has as many briery jungles as the eastern part and so induce him to take up his summer residence here.

MYRTLE WARBLER

In May little Myrtle Warbler passes through Washington going northward. He looks as though he might be Audubon's twin brother, but Audubon Warbler's throat is yellow while Myrtle's is clear white.

Some species of warblers build upon the ground, some in bushes, and some in trees. (Lutescent Warbler builds upon the ground.)



Photo by J. H. Bowles

NEST OF LUTESCENT WARBLER

VIREOS

Late in April the basket makers begin to arrive. They are tiny birds about the size of the warblers but much more plainly dressed. They have chosen gray and white—excellent colors for neat but busy mechanics. These colors serve as a protection. Gray and white corresponds so nicely with the lights and shades of the leaves and bark, that a Vireo may often sing for half an hour directly over our heads, while we search for the tantalizing singer and yet fail to see him.

The baskets are almost always light in color. The birds use plant down, white strips of paper, and plants. The lining is made of fine grass stems.

Sometimes mosses are woven into the nest, but seldom are there enough to make the nest dark in color. These little nest baskets are hung from the forking twigs, a little late for May Day but they are more carefully hung than the May fairies hang theirs.

CASSIN VIREO

Cassin Vireo loves to suspend his nest from a fir limb, but he is sometimes satisfied with an alder.

By the last of April his sharp and clear whistle rings over the open fir bordered lowlands. "Spirit, come home," he says in almost thrush-like tones.

His white wing bars, the broken circle of white which nearly surrounds his eye, and a white stripe from his bill to his eye, help to distinguish Cassin Vireo from his cousins.

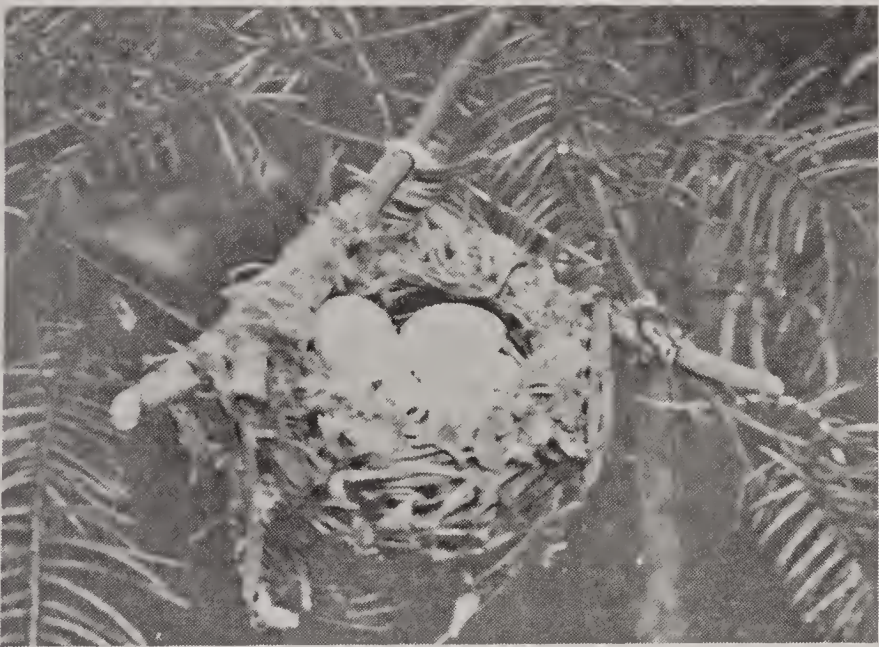


Photo by the Author
NEST OF CASSIN VIREO

WESTERN WARBLING VIREO

This bird is generally a little more common than Cassin Vireo. Its song is also more monotonous: "Ptwether, pweth-

er, leether," he warbles over and over again from an alder tree. He may keep you looking for half an hour before you can see him, so nicely do his colors blend with those of the trees.

Don't be discouraged, bird study is slow work, but it is worth the time. In the beginning, it usually takes me two weeks to be sure I have a perfect picture of my bird. It takes about this time during the nesting season when the bird is found in a certain locality every day, otherwise it may take months or even years.

I remember very well the two weeks I gave to Western Warbling Vireo. I went to that alder grove not once but many times every day.



Photo by the Author
NEST WESTERN WARBLING VIREO

How the little fellow would plague. He could keep out of sight so easily! But

at last I found out how to watch. He is a happy fellow and sings while he works. A quick flutter of wings away from a thick clump of leaves, and another quick flutter towards it, often indicate that mother bird is being relieved from duty. Now, just give Mr. Warbling Vireo time to get settled and he'll sing upon the nest as gaily as when he is playing a game of flutter and dash through the trees.

Shake the limb very gently and a little gray head will appear above the nest. The white line over the eye will show conspicuously and thus helps you to indentify him.

Be quiet again and he'll sink back into the nest and sing again: "Ptwhether, pwether, leether," to the little wife who is hopping over the leaves after insects and insect eggs.

RED EYED VIREO

My favorite vireo is Red Eye. I used to go to his haunts day after day to listen to his "Sweet, sweet, sweet Marie, Ma-rie, here dearie, tweedle dee," interspersed with "Spirit, come here."

The ash, cotton wood and alder formed a roof for the slough; the carpet was made of Hedge Nettle and Skunk Cabbage bordered with Spireae and Syringa.

Each day, as I approached, his voice rose clear and commanding in the distance; nearer and nearer he came until he

paused on a limb over head. His voice sounded much like Cassin's but he had more words to his song.

We did not know then that Red Eye was here. "Surely," I said, "this is Red Eye," but the bird workers said: "No, Red Eye is not here," so I went back to listen to him call to "Sweet Marie" and to wonder. New species are coming every year.

Finally some one suggested that his notes were preacher like and then I could hear the sermon, too, but I liked it better before I knew it was a sermon.

Red Eyed Vireo is growing more common every year. His markings are much like those of Western Warbling Vireo but there is no mistaking their songs when once they are thoroughly learned.



RED EYED VIREO



Photo by Finley and Bohnman
WESTERN HOUSE WREN AT ENTRANCE OF
NESTING HOLE

WESTERN HOUSE WREN

Everyone knows this tiny brownish grey bird and everyone loves him.

He comes early in spring time and soon sets about the important business of nest building. A hole in a tree, a tin can or even an old derby hat serves as a cavity. He lines it nicely with down or feathers.

The mother bird slips on and you may know the first egg is being laid. When she has five or six she begins to brood. After fourteen days the tiny nestlings ap-

pear, all appetite. Then indeed the parents are busy.

Besides their jolly songs Western House Wren will scold and the mother bird will make a sort of soothing note to her brood.

SEATTLE WREN

Robin is sometimes blamed for the small cherry crop; Steller Jay gets credit for laying unlawful claim to the vegetable gardens but every one loves the wrens.

While I write, from the thicket just outside of my yard floats to me one of little Seattle Wren's sweet songs: "E-e-e-e-e, sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet," he says. He paused a moment and now, from the thicket, I hear, "Pee, pee pee, hoo, hu hu, hu, hu." This one appears to be his favorite. But he knows many songs—so many that it will take us years to learn them all.

I have loved and listened to him for many years and he is still surprising me with songs entirely new.

Sometimes his notes become classic and he sings of his joys and his hopes in Latin. "Spero, spero," he whistles. Again he is vain and sings of himself, "U-m-m-m, sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, h-e-e, hu, hu, hu, hu, hu," or "Sweeten he-e, hu, hu, hu, hu!"

Last June, I saw a pair building upstairs over my door. One of them

snatched a cord from the ground and started up a ladder. But the cord was fastened. It gave the little fellow a jerk, throwing him off the round. The string was over the round but he clung to it while he hung suspended in air. The string would not pull loose and he finally had to let it go. Then he flew over the fence and picked up a whole mouthful of shavings as a substitute.

A few days later I found five eggs in the nest.

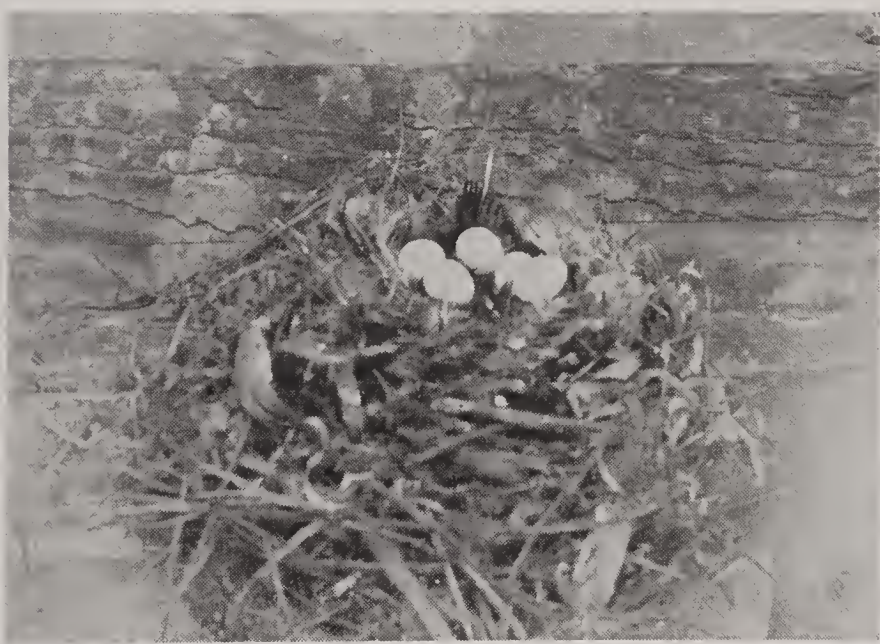


Photo by the Author

NEST OF SEATTLE WREN

One day the school children hung a nail sack in the woods. A hammer held the pocket open. They forgot the sack for a while and when they returned for it, there was a little brown bird and a nest full of eggs in it. A crevice in an

overturned root of a tree suits him well for a building spot.

Seattle Wren is a busy bird; he has to work; he has to sing; and sometimes he thinks he needs to scold. He is wise, though; I never have found him scolding very near the nest.

All Coast lovers of music should know this songster. We trust no Seattle child is a stranger to him. Not only is he the best singer among the wrens, but he ranks among the best singers of all our feathered citizens on the Coast.

His bill is long and curved, a white line curves over his eye. His wings and tail are finely barred.

WESTERN WINTER WREN

Few birds love the deep forest—it is too dark and too dirty, but along the paths in the deep damp woods where the logs are moss-covered, dwells a golden brown bird but little larger than a Hummingbird. He might almost dispute Hummingbird's to be called our smallest bird.

We may stop and play with him for half an hour. We may talk to him and tease him until he comes almost to our hands. Stand perfectly still but talk to him all the time keeping the voice low and musical. He'll soon imagine he can drive you away. He is so tiny and he looks so comical in his big effort to scare you.

Look and listen for him in all seasons

especially when you are taking a walk through the woods on a bright sunny day in winter. You may meet him in the deep lonely gulches in summer. Then if you are very lucky, in some crevice or under a log you may find his home.

The song is a rapid trill. It is hard to make words out of it but the ear remembers it after one hearing; its character is so distinct. It reminds one of a sweet toned bell.

TULE WREN

We are to visit a bird colony this time. We shall need a particular costume in order to be presentable there. Hip boots are not usually considered an essential part of a calling costume, but we shall need them for we are going to wade. The tiny settlement is out among the buck beans, cattails, and yellow water lilies. Don't be afraid—it will be the easiest bird hunting you ever did. As we tramp through the slough, we may find a coot's nest. And then just think of finding a whole colony of bird homes!

The architecture is a little queer. Each house looks like a well woven pocket. It is made of strips of tule stems and lined with down. The houses hang suspended from the tules.

What a commotion the birds make all around us! It can hardly be called music. How happy they are in making the noise.

They almost bend double. Heads are thrown back and tails are perked up until heads and tails almost meet while the little throats pour forth volumes of noise—just noise, but the birds don't know it.

When we get to the center of the colony we may stand still and count a dozen homes. If we can find an empty house, we may take it with us. No need to handle with care, it is so well woven that we might play catch with it.

The nests are hung too high for the water of the lake to reach them and they are closed at the top; so the little folks are sheltered from the rain and from the lake.

The egg is reddish brown.



NEST OF TULE WREN

CHICKADEES

A gay little troop of Chickadees have just surrounded me. No need to look up from my work to know they are there; such a lively chatter these sociable little people make. I wonder how many thoughts "Chick-a-dee, dee, dee," expresses for they repeat it over and over as they cling to the leaves right side up or upside down.

When Chickadee talks my ear tells me where he is but when he sings, I must hunt for him—he is a ventriloquist then.

He may be within a few feet of me and yet make me look in the top of the trees for him.



Photo by W. L. Dawson

NEST AND EGGS OF OREGON CHICKADEE

The grayish brown chickadee with crown and throat black and the side of its head white is the Oregon Chickadee.

He is a neat, dainty home maker. I saw him excavating for a home site last May. An old snag hung over the water. He would peck out a chunk of wood, carry it away, drop it, and then return for another piece. He apparently wanted no litter in his back yard.

Oregon Chickadee chooses a deciduous stub and Chestnut-backed Chickadee chooses an evergreen stub. How do the little birds know the difference.

Sometimes Oregon Chickadee finds an old stump which has just the sides standing. He enjoys just such a place. Soon you may look down from the top and see the mother bird upon the nest.

Late in June I found a pair of Chestnut-backed Chickadees busy around a little, new, clean-looking hole in a tall stub. They hesitated to go in while I watched. But the baby birds were hungry so at last one parent entered but it whirled quickly and looked at me to be certain I was not playing it false. But the little folk had seen the juicy bug and they raised such a clamor that the bug had to be presented. I could hear them very distinctly. When this parent came out, the other entered to deliver a load. The parents worked finely

together, carrying baby bugs to baby birds. Baby birds live principally upon worms and insects.



CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE

BLACKBIRDS AND THEIR COUSINS

What song is more welcome than Red-winged Blackbirds' "Okel-e-a?"

Redwing begins to sing in January. Now, January is not noted for its music in the air, so when, clear and sweet as Meadow Lark's song, Redwings "O-kele-a" rings out upon the cold air, our glad imagination ushers in the spring.

The glossy blackbird with the bright red shoulder straps flashes past in full song, and he seems a fairy general fluting to the sleeping buds. And we wonder if the Pussy Willows will hear him and awaken.

His notes remind us of Meadow Lark's. This is not strange for the birds are closely related.

Redwing's colors are black and red but his wife dresses much plainer. She wears a brown dress streaked with buff.

The tule covered sloughs are Redwing's loved haunts. From the tules, he suspends his home. It looks like a deep open basket. If we approach too near the birds get very much excited. They don't understand that we can't walk upon the water and that to be able to disturb that home we would need rubber boots or a boat.

BREWER BLACKBIRD

Brewer Blackbird is a bird of the meadows and grainfields. He wears a coat of sober black. They prefer more open situations for nesting than Redwing does and usually make their homes in colonies, sometimes close to the ground, sometimes high up in stubs of trees.



Photo by W. L. Dawson

GROUND NEST OF BREWER'S BLACKBIRD

WESTERN MEADOW LARK

Meadow Lark does not need an introduction. Everybody knows him; he thrills the human musician and compels even the dull ear to listen.



Photo by W. G. Dawson

NEST AND EGGS OF WESTERN MEADOWLARK

I have met men who are ever looking backwards towards the East, refusing to listen to western songs or to let me listen either; but they too, would admit that Meadow Lark can sing.

“W-e-e, chere, cheery,” “He-e-r-e coo, sweet, chizawe,” the bird whistles so dis-

tinct that the piano may reproduce the exact intervals: but Meadow Lark need never fear that any instrument will ever copy the pure heavenly quality of his tones.

There are boys, 'tis said, who will wound birds; but this songster has almost won for himself, freedom from the cruel stone.

No one tires of his music—he sings so well, and his songs are so many and varied. He may sing one set of songs in one neighborhood and another set in a neighborhood not more than five or ten miles away.

We love him, too, because he sings in every season.

He brings so much good cheer that he is practically unmolested. The birds are, therefore, increasing in numbers every year.

Early in April precious love secrets lie hidden upon the ground among the meadow grasses.

BULLOCK ORIOLE

We can almost forgive the man who lives in Western Washington but who has spent his childhood in the East when he misses the Orioles.

Beautiful Bullock Oriole is found in Eastern Washington. He is dressed in yellow, orange and black. Occasionally he comes through the mountain passes to the western part of the state.

I shall always remember a fine old grove of maples on the flats of the Columbia River where they sang for me. How I craned my neck and strained my eyes to see the nest which I knew should hang from the tops of those trees.

My stay with them was short or I should have ordered a nest made of special material for a souvenir. Should you wish one made of mother's or sister's hair, just place the material in the trees where the birds can find it.

Caterpillars make fine dinners for Oriole. What a world full of troublesome insects we should have were it not for the birds?

SWALLOWS

Swallows have been called sky-sweepers. Back and forth, back and forth, round and round the little sweepers go for many hours every day. They are cleaning the sky. Their wings are so long and strong that the birds do not easily tire. This is fortunate for us for they destroy millions of harmful insects. Those who know the swallows well, will give them a royal welcome.

Some persons fear that the insects which infest the birds, may be hurtful to the cattle; but this is a mistake. Insects which live upon cattle will not live upon birds. On the other hand, the swallows destroy many insects that would otherwise annoy the cattle.

In the autumn, when the insects grow scarce, the swallows leave us and go to sweep the sunny southern skies.

TREE SWALLOWS

Long before the "Lilacs all are blooming and the cherry flowers are white" the Tree Swallow comes. We are usually surprised to meet him so early when his food supply is apparently so limited.

We are glad to see him, though, for his happy twitter is a herald of approaching spring.

Even at a distance, we may recognize him by his shining white breast and his steel blue coat. When he sits upon a telephone wire, showing little but his white breast, it is some times difficult to tell whether you are looking at Tree Swallow or Violet Green Swallow. Look carefully! If the white partially encircles the eye, it is Violet Green Swallow.

Old Woodpecker holes offer them fine home sites. They are apt, too, to steal the box that was intended for Bluebird.



TREE SWALLOW

If you prefer the swallows, you may put up a dozen boxes in the yard and have as many homes there, for the swallows love to live in colonies.

I have watched a whole flock circle around a hole in a cottonwood; apparently, they were all contending for the same home. A good climber may find a number of nests in the same snag, if there are holes enough.

There are few birds, if any, who have no love song. The swallows can sing as well as twitter.

NORTHERN VIOLET GREEN SWALLOW

From among all our swallows, the Violet Green carries off the beauty prize. A part of his back is a bright leaf green, the rest a beautiful violet. His breast is clear white like Tree Swallows.

Tree Swallow and Violet Green Swallow are often found sporting together.

BARN SWALLOWS

Every year brings a flock of these small workers in pottery to our town. There is a large brick building in the center of the village which, apparently, is just to their liking. We sometimes find about forty bowl-shaped bits of pottery under the eaves of this house. The nests are placed in rows on the east and south sides of the house.

I have often watched the birds gather the building clay. They troop down upon a mud puddle, a dozen or more at a time. There they keep their tiny wings fluttering over their backs—butterfly fashion. This is to keep their dainty feet from sinking into the mud.

They pick up balls of the mud, and fly to the eaves with them. They carry ball after ball. Each new one is plastered

fast to the others until the homes are complete.

Queer little masons are building queer little homes. The homes look like bowls. They are rough looking bowls for they are made of mud marbles plastered together.

The evening air around this place is literally alive with Barn Swallows, sweeping the sky for insects.

These birds pay a heavy rent in our village. I wonder sometimes at their unvarying faith in us. Why do they continue to come! Upon the side walks, under the ruined homes, I have often seen the dying baby swallows gasping for breath.

There are still a few boys who do not measure any pain save that which comes to themselves. To them a tiny, mangled, starving bird makes no appeal.



Photo by the Author
NEST OF BARN SWALLOWS

STELLER JAY

Here comes Steller Jay, the sauciest feathered imp of the woods. We wanted everything quiet so that Golden Crowned Kinglet would not be frightened away. Our Kinglet lesson is lost—while “Ack, ack, ack, yank, yank,” yells Blue Jay. The more I try to silence him, the more he sauces me. What is he doing now? It sounds as if he had stolen Grand Mother’s coffee mill and was working it vigorously, or as if he had a double set of teeth to grate.

He is seldom caught singing. He is not amiable enough to let us hear him if he can help it. But he can sing. He sings to his mate in the spring. His song is a musical crow.

A bully though he is, he can be frightened, too. I found a pair in the thicket. One bird was cautiously stealing about, without making any noise. The other followed me back and forth uttering genuine cries of fear while I hunted for the secret. As Blue Jay is so seldom afraid, I concluded there must be a baby bird hidden among the branches and that the father bird was afraid I might find the little darling when the mother bird carried food to it.

These birds are splendid jokers. I have seen a flock of them tease Sharp-shinned Hawk for half an hour until the hawk

went off over the trees thoroughly discouraged because he couldn't make a meal of a Blue Jay.

Out from among the trees came Steller Jay with Sharp-shinned Hawk after him. As the hawk was about to strike, the jay gave a hideous yell, frightening the hawk out of his wits. Then the hawk went away and sat down upon a limb by himself. He evidently intended to be good. But the jay was not satisfied. Into the same tree, he went, too. A lot of other jays followed, apparently for the purpose of seeing the fun.



Photo by the Author
NEST OF STELLER JAY

The jay approached the hawk, but the hawk gave no sign. He edged sidewise a little nearer and a little nearer until he was within a couple of feet of the hawk. He acted just like a bantering school boy.

The hawk regained courage and made another dash for his dinner, only to be frightened again by Steller's demon-like yell.

I am afraid I can't make many friends for this handsome bird; he breaks up nests, steals eggs, takes possession of potato crops, and sauces wickedly.

Perhaps when we develop a sense of humor strong enough to understand that he is the "Peck's bad boy of Birdland," we shall be able to laugh with him more.

Most Washington birds are well protected by law. But no law protects Steller Jay. Shall we blame him for trying to protect himself?

Steller Jay makes a beautiful nest of sticks. The lining is of rootlets. This is welded to the sticks with mud.

OREGON JAY

Oregon Jay reminds us but very little of Steller Jay. He, too, wants a part of our food supply, but he comes quietly, and confidently upon the porch, snatches a morsel from the table, or helps himself to a part of Fido's dinner.

If he finds nothing, he looks around inquiringly as much as to say: "Isn't my dinner ready yet?"

Because of his familiar ways around camps, he has been called the Camp Robber.

Early in the morning, he may awaken

the sleepers by hopping upon their bed. He is reminding them that there will be company to breakfast. He is sometimes photographed while he sits upon a camper's foot.

One day some boys caught an Oregon Jay for me so that I might paint his picture. As it was wash day, I could not sit down to brush and paint at once.

I put the bird into my apron pocket and pinned the mouth of the pocket around his neck. He said but little but if my arm came too near, the plucky little fellow bit it.

One spring, with aching heart, I followed up the evidences of a tragedy. On the seventeenth of May I saw a parent bird upon the nest in a young fir. She allowed me to almost touch her. She was brooding four half fledged little ones. I left them in possession of the lonely bit of wood road, but I returned in a few days for another visit. Two little forms had vanished; one mangled body was on the ground; and the last baby, apparently sick, was still in the cradle.

Again I returned to the place, the nest was empty. Both parents were still near it. Together we three gazed mournfully at the empty home. One bird gave a pathetic musical whistle and then both birds disappeared among the branches. What the author of the tragedy was, I do not know. Scenes like this are many.

THE WESTERN CROW

What child does not know the crow! He is common all over our country. He is usually very much in evidence, very entertaining, and also, well able to take care of himself. He soon learns whether he is to keep aloof from his human neighbors, or whether he may be sociable.



Photo by W. L. Dawson

NEST AND EGGS OF WESTERN CROW

I recall a flock which used to congregate upon a long bridge which crossed an arm of a lake. The bridge was much frequented by anglers and I suppose "Jim Crow" reaped a bountiful harvest from the fish that were discarded upon the

bridge. At any rate he appeared to know that he was not the object hunted and that he profited by visits of the people.

There he and I used to have some very interesting conversations; there, I used to make love to him and found the wooing both successful and charming. He would meet me at the end of the bridge on my early walks. I often found him perched upon the rail and I never failed to greet him "Good morning, Jim Crow, you are just the nicest old bird I know. Come right along. I like you, Jim Crow, of course I do. Come on, pretty bird. Have they been abusing my big bird? Come right along." Thus I rattled on, being careful to keep the tone of voice as gentle as possible. Down from his perch, he hopped, and fluttered along in the dust nearer and nearer to me, talking all the time. His sentences were as finely inflected as a person's: "Uck, uck, uck, uck, uck, uck," he said. I could call him almost to my fee.

The wise old raven, which after all is only a big crow, has an interesting place in mythology. He was once snowy white says the story. Then he was Apollo's messenger. Now Apollo loved a human maiden. She was pleased with his attentions but she thought it would be doubly delightful to have two lovers. The following is taken from a poem by Saxe.

“She flirted with another lover—
So at least the story goes,
And was wont to meet him slyly
Underneath the blushing rose.”

This the Raven told Apollo, who shot the girl with a poisoned arrow. But Apollo grieved for her and blamed the Raven for telling him.

Then he turned upon the Raven
“Wanton babler, see thy fate!
Messenger of mine no longer,
Go to Hades with thy prate!
Weary Pluto with thy tattle;
Hither, monster, come not back,
And, to match thy disposition
Henceforth be thy plumage black.”

MAGPIE

Everyone knows these showy black birds with the white breasts and wing patches.



Photo by W. L. Dawson

MAGPIE NEST FROM ABOVE

They winter on the Sound. In February and March they gather into a flock and go to Eastern Washington for their nesting season.

They are not popular with the cattle men as they pick the backs of sore horses and annoy the cattle.

It is true that they act as scavengers and we grant them this field of usefulness but condemn their habit of eating small song birds and their eggs. Even young chickens are their victims.

NORTHWESTERN FLICKER

Here is one of the most conspicuous of Washington birds. Everybody knows him although few call him by his right name. He is called the "Highholder," I presume because his holdings are so high. He is also called "The Yellow Hammer," because his eastern cousin is known by that name. Ours had better be called the Pink Hammer. He hammers and the undersides of his wings are pink.

When we flush him from a precious wormy log and he flies low, the clear white rump shows conspicuously. When he flies high, the rose on the undersides of his wings is in evidence. When he stands upon a roof anxiously calling for his mate, his spotted breast crossed by a black crescent identifies him.

He spends a great part of the year freeing the trees from harmful insects. In the autumn Mr. Flicker comes for his share of ripe apples. He has earned some for he has helped to take care of the apple trees.

"Wick up, wick up, wick up," he says, as he clings to the trunks of the trees. "Chap," he calls from the house tops, or, as he flies, he sings a rolling song, a good imitation of which you can make by filling the lungs with air, closing the lips and forcing the air through the lips while they rapidly open and close.

Any one has missed a fine treat, who has not seen a pair of these birds dance their love dance.

They face each other and dance to the tune of their own music: "Wick up, wick up, wick up, wick up, wick." They hop over each other, whirl, and go on with the dance and the music.

A round hole near the top of a tall stub, is usually the door to Flicker's home. Just tap upon the stub, and if he is at home, he'll come to the door to see who is rapping.

*Colaptes c*

NORTHWESTERN FLICKER

GAIRDNER WOODPECKER

A dainty litte tap, tap on the cotton-wood often calls our attention to a woodpecker. He hammers away on the under sides of a limb with no fear of falling.



Sketch by the Author

GAIRDNER WOODPECKER AT WORK

The white stripe down his back; his smoky white breast, and his black coat

spotted with white, help us to know him. He wears a scarlet ribbon across his crown. He is one of the smallest of our woodpeckers.

Harris Woodpecker looks very much like little Gairdner except that he is larger. Little Gairdner is usually found near low ground. Harris Woodpecker loves the hillsides.

Cabanis Woodpecker is a rare comer. He looks like Harris Woodpecker except that his breast is a clear white and not a smoky white.

NORTHERN PILEATED WOODPECKER

This large, black, long necked bird is a striking object in the open places of the deep woodland.

We might almost imagine it to be "the woman with the red cap," which the fairy changed to a bird.

The sides of Woodpecker's head and neck are white and he wears a bright red comb. His dress is black.

When he tears to pieces an unsound tree or stub, he can make a noise very much like that made by a strong man hammering. We may hear him a long distance away. His colors are so bright that he is easily located. He searches so earnestly for insects, and he hammers so

loud that we may sometimes slip up near enough to touch him.

Although this beautiful bird still has a wide range over the United States, it is growing scarcer every year. He is an easy mark for the self-named sportsman. But we wonder why any one should wish to kill him; he is of no value dead and the trees need him alive. He spends many hours every day searching the bark for insects.

WESTERN TANAGER

The Western Tanager is one of the handsomest of all the group. We have so many beautiful birds but there are few if any others who wear such gay colors; his dress is golden and white bars, his cape black, and his head dress orange or red.

He is more beautiful than his eastern cousin the Scarlet Tanager.

Although arrayed in all this finery he does not go around showing off. Many people do not even know he is here, for he loves the leafy tops of the tall firs.

He sometimes slips slyly into the cherry trees, helps himself to some fruit; sings a few songs about it and then disappears among his loved firs.

He is smaller than a Robin. There is a resemblance between their songs. Tanager's music sounds to me like Robin's would be if Robin were singing with a cold in his head. There is also a little difference in the wording of their songs.

Tanager says, "Cheer up, cheer up, sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet." Robin says, "Cheer up, cheer up, cheer-eer."

THE CEDAR WAXWING

The Cedar Waxwing is a trim quiet citizen sometimes called the Quaker bird. He is scrupulously neat; every feather is in place and carefully smoothed down.

His colors are fawn and dove. On the end of his tail is a band of bright yellow. When he is in full plumage, there are a couple of bright red spots upon his wings. They shine like wax. Cedar Waxwing wears a small crest.

In late autumn we may see flocks of trim looking waxwings near an insect infested swamp, catching flies in genuine flycatcher style.

If anything disturbs the nest of these gentle birds, they take a position a few yards away and watch the robbery pathetically saying scarcely a word and offering no resistance.



Photo by J. W. Edson
LACE TRIMMED NEST OF CEDAR WAXWING

FLY CATCHERS

Here we shall have hard work to do. It will take sharp-eyed boys and girls to tell the difference between the fly catchers.

Several species of these plain colored birds are about the same size and color. Their markings are also very similar: "An ash colored bird five inches long, with white wing bars, a short neck and a small crest;" and you may be describing the Western Fly Catcher, Traill's Fly Catcher, the Western Wood Pewee, or Hammond's Fly Catcher.

Any one of these will sit upon an exposed limb and patiently wait for flies. At midday, when most birds are concealed among the leaves, a fly catcher will be seated upon a dead limb in the bright sunshine. He looks as though he were half asleep. He is really very wide awake.

Suddenly out he darts, catches an insect and returns to the same perch.

Each species has its own language and most species have localities which they love best. If we love to wander through Birdland, our ears, rather than our eyes, will help us to distinguish the fly catchers—even those which resemble each other most.

As these birds are insect eaters, they are, of course, summer birds.

After we have worked a few years

among them, we shall know very nearly where to look for each species, especially during the nesting season.

By the middle of April, the Western Fly Catcher arrives. He has a single whistle as clear and penetrating as the call note of Russet-backed Thrush.

It is not quite so round and full and it is more slowly given. A damp shaded, woodland patch is a favorite place for him.



Photo by the Author

NEST OF WESTERN FLY CATCHER

TRAILL FLY CATCHER

Traill Fly Catcher is a late comer. His sleepy "Weet you" or "Peet-ya" tell us of his arrival. We may find his nest late in July in a thicket of willows and wild rose bushes. You might easily mistake it for a Warbler nest. Never name a bird home unless you see the bird upon it.

Unless you wish the nest to come to grief touch neither nest or eggs. There is nothing else in nature so sensitive as a bird.

I know a close observer of birds, who believes that certain species even break their own eggs when they have been seen by a human eye.



Photo by the Author
NEST OF TRAILL FLY CATCHER

OLIVE SIDED FLY CATCHER

This is our big Fly Catcher. He is about the size of Cedar Waxwing. He loves a stumpy upland. Over this for half a mile, his clear and shrill "We hear" rings. He sits high up in a fir which is dead at the top and whistles "We hear." He says it so loudly that we can't help but hear.

"We hear" is his song. He says "Pupit" when he talks.



WESTERN WOOD PEWEE

WESTERN WOOD PEWEE

Western Wood Pewee loves an open alder and cottonwood fringe bordering a body of water.

Usually he says but half his name, but listen to him at four o'clock in the morning. Then he will say "Pewee" very distinctly.

THE KINGBIRD

The American Kingbird is rare in Western Washington, but I have seen it on different occasions on the eastern shore of Lake Washington.

The Arkansas Kingbird is found in Eastern Washington but is also rare west of the Cascades.



Photo by W. L. Dawson

NEST AND EGGS OF WESTERN KINGBIRD

THE CALIFORNIA CUCKOO

Our California Cuckoo is one of the most difficult birds to find. It is usually hidden away in the swampy thickets but its "Coo, coo, coo, coo, coo, couk, couk, couk" tells of its presence. Although the bird is large, being about a foot long, it generally manages to keep out of sight.

It comes in June. I shall always remember my first good cuckoo visit. I had

been watching for it for years, and had begun to fear I should never see it.

It was the twenty-third of June. I had taken a long hot tramp and the birds had taught me nothing new. At last I saw a battered old Robin's home in the thicket. For want of anything better to look at, I stopped to examine the ruin. When lo! above Robin's nest about eleven feet from the ground, I saw a strange, long curved yellow bill. I held my breath for fear the bird would disappear in the denser thicket before it told me its name.

It stood my gaze but a moment. Then, like a flash, it was out of sight. I clapped my hands with delight! It was our cuckoo!

She sang from the thicket, "Coo, coo, coo, coo, couk, couk." No use to try to follow her, so I went away, but I came back in about an hour. She was on the nest again and by this time she had gained courage enough to try to decoy. She flew low in a semi-circle towards the deeper thicket exposing as she flew the beautiful rose of the under side of her wing.

Cuckoo is reddish brown glossed with green. Her under parts are white.

That home was not very well built. It was a rude, shallow nest of twigs loosely put together. There was a scanty lining of lichens.

The eggs were pretty. There were three blue ones as large as a Partridge egg.

How big Cuckoo manages to get on and off of that tiny, shallow, platform-like nest without rolling off the eggs is a wonder. I have since found Cuckoo's home more rudely built than this one and its location more exposed.

It is said that the babies, while they are developing their muscles, kick the nest to pieces. Before they are ready to fly they have little left to sit upon but the limb.

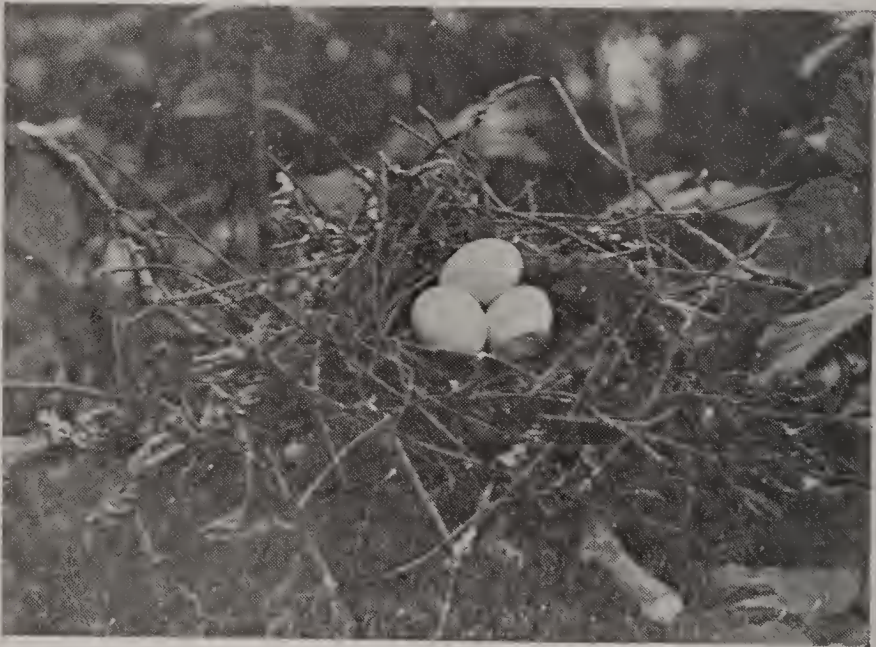


Photo by the Author
NEST OF CALIFORNIA CUCKOO

We are proud of our Cuckoo, though, if she is not much of an architect, she builds her own home and takes care of her own children. The English Cuckoo lays her eggs in the nests of other birds; one egg in this nest and one in that so the little orphaned brothers and sisters are sepa-

rated from birth and are brought up by strangers.

Cuckoo sings most on cloudy days and for this reason is sometimes called the Rain Crow.

WINGED FLOWERS

Did you ever see the Humming Birds swarm about a cherry tree when the tree was in full bloom? Some years bring greater numbers than others. In April the beautiful male birds are more in evidence than later. Their fire-colored throats and rufous backs shine gorgeously against the white blossoms of the tree.

As they flash against a blossom, take a sip, spring horizontally back from the flowers, hold themselves poised a moment



Photo by the Author

WHERE THE WINGED FLOWERS GROW

and then dash at an other flower, they look like bright winged flowers.

Occasionally they smack their lips as though the honey were good. The Humming Bird appears partial to red flowers. It holds itself poised before a honeysuckle, nasturtium, or other red flower. The little wings beat the air so rapidly, that the bird needs no limb upon which to stand while it drinks the nectar from the flower cups.

Our Rufous Hummer loves to place her nest in a rose bush up against a house. I do not mean that she always builds there! I have found the nest fastened to a Devil's Club in the depth of the forest. What a dainty home it is—a tiny cotton cup, covered with lichens. It looks like a small knot upon the limb. Two white eggs, the size of small beans are placed in the nest. The bird never varies from this number.

PACIFIC NIGHT HAWK

This bird is a close relative to the Hummer. As is often true of relatives, they don't look much alike.

Night Hawk has a big mouth and almost no bill. He flies with his mouth open. It is his insect trap. He catches the insects as he flies.

His name sometimes gets him into trouble. It suggests mischief; but he is a hawk for insects only. Like the swal-

lows, he helps to sweep the sky, and the sky's dirt is his dinner.

He is accustomed to being misunderstood. He belongs to the Goatsuckers. Long ago people believed that this family of mysterious birds sucked the goats.

Have you not heard his boom high up overhead on a warm summer evening? He makes a curved dash down and then up and scoops up a mouthful of insects.

The white spots on his wings, which look like holes, and his mysterious booming noise, make him an attractive object in the evening sky.

Night Hawk does not take the trouble to build any nest. The eggs are laid late in July when the weather is warm and dry. The flat roof of a house, a ledge of



Photo by the Author

NEST OF THE PACIFIC NIGHT HAWK

rock, a log, the top of a stump, or the ground, is all the nest he wants. I have flushed the bird from a ledge of rock and found one or two eggs in the scanty grass.

This, the tenth of August. Yesterday, while walking through the woods, I saw the bird fly into the bushes, then it began to talk excitedly.

"This is late for eggs; there are little people here," I thought. After hunting awhile, I found some broken egg shells upon the ground. Those children were not very old, or the bird would not have been defending them so near home.

Did you ever have Night Hawk angry at you? High up into the air he goes and then dashes down at you making the most comical noise. It reminds one of the spitting of a cross cat, only Night Hawk spits much louder and fiercer than puss does.

In the autumn, before leaving for the South, these birds hunt in loose flocks which sometimes extend for nearly a mile.

Like all purely insect eating birds, they belong to spring, summer and early autumn.

CALIFORNIA CREEPER

The Creeper is a strange little dweller of the dark trunks of the evergreen trees. In color, form, and size, it reminds one of a Wren. Having previously heard the name, anyone who sees the bird even for the first time, will know it. It truly creeps up the tree as it searches the cracks for insects.

This is the middle of December and the weather is clear and cold. I saw Creeper today. Up the tree trunk it went with that queer, jerky, creeping movement; its little head bobbing at every length. It worked patiently upwards, never downwards.



Photo by the Author

NEST OF CALIFORNIA CREEPER

The tree was a tall hemlock and the first branches were about sixty feet from

the ground. When it reached these it flew downward nearly to the foot of another tree and began working up that. When I lost it on the dark bowl of the tree. I listened for its tiny "Eep, eep." It can walk upside down on the under side of a limb beautifully. Its tail feathers are stiff and pointed. It presses these tightly against the limb and in this way is in no danger of falling.

While the tree trunk furnishes it a living it also affords it a house. It finds a tree the bark of which is scaling. It pushes some sticks up behind a piece of bark, then it shreds some bark until it is as soft as felt. This makes a bed soft enough for any baby. Upon this bed five or six tiny Creepers will lie. Think of having a home behind a piece of bark! A tiny hole through the bark makes an excellent door. The eggs are white, spotted with lilac. Most of the spots are around the larger end.

In spite of the hanging bark and the cunning door, it takes a sharp-eyed Nature worker, to find the home.

The voice of the bird is small and weak: "Eep, eep," it says so faintly and in such a high key, one might easily imagine a bug were speaking.

It works so earnestly that it is easy to take it unawares and hit it as it creeps up the tree. One day one was brought to me

with a broken leg. How I did wish the little fellow had the skill of Dr. Long's bird and could splinter up that leg until it grew as good as new.

These are rare little birds and we have none to spare.

MOUNTAIN QUAIL

The boys who work in logging camps have the best chance to study the upland game birds. I shall never forget the precious hiding places of some of our birds which these woodmen once pointed out to me.

It was in May—the time when Nature is especially busy making the world interesting and beautiful.

“I've found a bird's nest upon the ground among the logs,” said one of these



Photo by the Author
NEST OF SOOTY GROUSE

men. "It's a grouse's nest or a pheasant's, or something. Sam Button found another near it, and Carl Peterson found one a mile from there."

Sure enough away out there upon the lonely hill-side now half bare by the work of the loggers, was Sooty Grouse's nest. The logs still lay thick upon the ground and some trees and stubs were still standing. It was an ideal place for the land game birds.

Sooty Grouse is the big soot colored bird, sometimes called the Blue Grouse.

We searched in vain for the other nest which we were told was hidden near it. The next day we sought out the finder, and he led us to the spot. To my great delight it was Mountain Quail nest.

This home is hard to find and, by being too familiar with it, I had spoiled one containing one egg, two weeks before. I grieved over the ruin I had made; so, when I saw that this, too, was Mountain Quail's nest, I sat down by it and clapped my hands for joy. Here was the complete secret, twelve creamy white eggs. This time I was not insulting Mrs. Quail's intelligence. She can take care of twelve eggs, not just one.

Mountain Quail is the quail with the two long black plumes extending backwards from his crown. He is browner than California Quail. Haven't you met

him with his family and seen him hop upon a stump or log, those two plumes standing straight up while he cried excitedly: "Chuck, chuck, chuck, knee'ark knee'ark?" The little knight takes this danger position while his lady flies off into the thicket and the tiny folk disappear under the logs, stumps, or brush quicker than you can think.

He stays in his exposed position long enough to divert your attention from the little ones to him.

He was not always Washington's bird but was introduced from the South. He stays with us now the entire year.



CALIFORNIA QUAIL

CALIFORNIA QUAIL

California Quail is our most common quail. He is bluer in color than Mountain Quail. On his head he wears a jaunty black plume which curves gracefully forward. His neck is adorned with a pretty black bib gracefully bordered with white.

When these birds are feeding in exposed places, the cock stands sentinel. With neck craned up, he is on the lookout for danger and ready to give warning.

But usually all one can see is a flash of blue as, with a whirr, a bird disappears into the thicket. I remember a pair of partridges that chose a secluded piece of railroad track for their feeding ground. I was seldom shrewd enough to get near them.

The male bird would hop upon a rail of the track and watch my every movement. His wife went quietly on with her eating perfectly confident that he would warn her in plenty of time to get out of danger.

When he feels that he is safe in the thicket, he crows in words something like these: "Uck, uck! oo"; "Uck, uck! oo." It sounds to me like a young rooster taking his first lesson in vocal music.

Some folks think Quails talk English. They tell us he says "Who are you"?

California Quail loves the districts, too.

A spot near a log with a slab for a roof offers an excellent home site.

Easter produces no prettier eggs than the spotted beauties presented by this bird. I have counted 20 in the same nest. But this is an unusual number. Sixteen is considered a full set.

These high figures explain why the bird still holds its own in spite of the "pot hunters."

Sometimes winter proves a greater foe to them than the gun. A heavy snow shuts off their food supply. Then a place should be shoveled clear near the edge of the woods and grain scattered every day while the snow lasts.

In the winter of 1908 and 1909, Seattle fed her quail at the City's expense.

The people will do this anywhere if the necessity is only suggested to them. The snow is often nearly gone before the needs of these timid little sufferers become apparent by the finding of some of them frozen.

OREGON RUFFED GROUSE

This is the Grouse that makes the drumming sound in the woods.

One day I was sitting quietly in the woods listening for bird notes when Oregon Ruffed Grouse appeared before me. Yes, there was the brown and rusty yellow barred coloring and the distinguish-

ing black ruffs. I was afraid to breathe. He walked to the end of the log, spread his wings and began flapping them swiftly downward, "Bump, bump, bumper-r-r." He stopped, turned and saw me and slipped quietly away into the thicket. But I was patting my hands with joy for I had seen the drummer drum.

They make their nests among the leaves or under a fallen log. She lays from eight to fourteen buffy eggs. If they are handled at all she will either leave the nest or break it up.

When her babies are in danger she utters a whirring sound "st," and exposes herself to attract attention until they are safe.



Photo by the Author

NEST OF OREGON RUFFED GROUSE

HAWKS AND OWLS

Western Washington is not very rich in Hawks and Owls. We have a number of species but most of them are transition birds; that is, they travel through here in the spring and autumn on their northern and southern journeys, so we have but a short time to enjoy them.

I know there are a great many people who still think that a Hawk or an Owl is a great enemy to chickens and therefore a thing to be shot on sight.

An occasional strong desire for a chicken dinner has given these beautiful birds a worse name by far than they deserve.

The contents of hundreds of their stomachs have been examined and we may know exactly what they do eat. Their food consists of insects and such animals as mice, rats, and gophers; all of which are injurious to crops.

A few species occasionally visit the hen yard: but should we stop to consider the number of dollars' worth that have been lost by these visits in our neighborhood in a year, would it be very many?

Excepting, perhaps, the work of a few species, the good that Hawks and Owls render to crops offsets many times the slight harm they do our chickens.



SHARP-SHINNED HAWK

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK

Sharp-Shinned Hawk is the villain in the Hawk family. He is the worst chicken thief, and the terror of the small song birds. So plentiful is he and so destruc-

tive that there should be a bounty on his head. Swallows are the only birds that fight him successfully. They circle above him and fly at his back and head and often make him retreat.

He is the small grey hawk with short wings and long tail we so often see.

The nest is hard to find. It is placed high in the evergreens, is made of sticks and lined with twigs.

Both mother and father bird help in hatching the eggs. If you come too near they will try to fight you away, shrieking "Zip, Zip," and will almost strike you.

BALD EAGLE

I think my readers will say with me that most of us can count upon our fingers the number of times we have seen an eagle in its wild state. One summer I made a visit to the birds of Orchard Island, one of the San Juan group. I knew the Bald Eagle came there occasionally to fish. Although I kept a sharp lookout for his coming, I failed to find him.

Then a good farmer came to the rescue by telling me we might find an eagle almost any day on Blakely Island.

A large part of Blakely Island was still wild and lonely.

We secured an Indian guide to row us there. None of us knew where "Eagle Cliffs" were located, so our guide depos-

ited us upon the beach near an Indian home. Then he turned his boat and disappeared over the waters of Puget Sound.

The undergrowth was so dense that it was almost impossible to leave the beach except where our Indian neighbors had made a small clearing. They came down to the beach to listen to our camp songs and to make sure our fire would not get beyond our control and start a forest fire. They told us we were far from Eagle Cliffs and that we could not possibly make our way through the dense underbrush to them. We would have to go by boat.

The next morning a pretty Indian girl rowed us around the Island. As soon as we came in sight of the cliffs, we saw a fine big bird watching us from the limb of a tall tree. He looked like a Golden Eagle but he wasn't. The young Bald Eagle wears a dress much like his more kingly cousin. But the Golden Eagle's legs are feathered to his toes. This is not true of the Bald.

Soon two fine big birds in full plumage appeared. They were white headed and white tailed. No mistaking them for Golden Eagles.

We drew our boat upon the beach and climbed a cliff while the eagles quietly watched. High up upon limbs of some giant firs were two nests. They were made of sticks. Each one was about the

size of an office desk. The piles were rough looking though. They looked like big piles of kindling wood.

Occasionally an eagle flew to a neighboring tree screaming as he went; but most of the time they were almost motionless.

How dignified they looked sitting so long and so still on their lofty perch. Not a single move we made escaped those piercing eyes.

We felt like rustics desecrating the private grounds of his Majesty the King.

We rowed away with a wish that these fine old cliffs might be owned by these fine old birds for many a year to come.

SPARROW HAWK

Sparrow Hawk is as beneficial as Sharp-Shinned is harmful. He hovers over our meadows, eats grasshoppers, crickets and other insects, and never harms other birds.

He is the smallest hawk we have. He has a rusty crown and coat, is blue on his sides, also on each side of his head. The ends of his tail feathers are black.

He is apt to nest in some cavity in bank or tree. The mother bird lays from three to five brown spotted eggs.

WESTERN REDTAIL

The Western Redtail is a large handsome bird. It is rusty brown with white mottles. It nests high in trees.

It is commonly called Hen Hawk but it lives chiefly on rats and ground squirrel and should be protected.



Photo by F. R. Decker
GOING AFTER WESTERN REDTAIL'S NEST

CALIFORNIA PIGMY OWL

The California Pigmy Owl is a day bird. He is a cute trusting fellow but little larger than a sparrow.

On my way to school one morning I heard what I thought might be a small donkey engine. The whistle came from a distance of about a quarter of a mile. On returning from school I heard my engine in the opposite direction. I inquired, but no one knew of a donkey engine in the neighborhood. Still the mysterious whistles continued. I could hear them almost any hour of the day and far into the night.

One Saturday I was watching Pygmy as he sat upon a stump. In a tall fir some distance away was another Pygmy Owl. From the fir came that same whistle. After a moment's silence, I heard it again.

Then my bird on the stump raised himself slightly and answered in the same tones. The secret was out. But what a noise to come from so tiny a throat!

This little owl is very unsuspicious of danger. Any one can approach within four or five feet of him. From the top of a stump he watches the approach of his visitor almost as fearlessly as a house kitten might. Sometimes one may almost touch him with the hand.

Many times, when a long distance away, my field glass has shown him to me sitting

so silently upon a stump that he might easily have been mistaken for a little brown knot.

There he sits until I am almost ready to touch him with my hand. If he is too high for me to reach him, he does not take the trouble to fly when I come to the foot of his stump. After he has satisfied himself that I am too big to eat, he gives me an occasional look, but appears more interested in an insect, a mouse, or a tiny bird that might come that way.

Sometimes when his position is too public and I fear he might get hurt, I try to drive him away by throwing sticks at him; but he simply raises himself after each throw to see where that funny stick went, and then sits quietly down again. He appears to know as well as I that the stick won't hit him and he evidently enjoys the game.

Unfortunately, he gets credit for being a bird killer but I have found him hunting many times apparently more interested in bugs than birds. However, one day I was walking through the meadow when I found him surrounded by a circle of warblers, thrushes and finches. Each was scolding in his own language at the little owl, but the owl sat perfectly still in the center looking very dignified and very innocent. The angry circle kept up the cry of alarm until I came to its assistance.



CALIFORNIA PYGMY OWL

One must be out in March and April to listen to the love notes and to watch for the homes of both Hawks and Owls.

Little Pygmy is said to make his home in old woodpecker holes.

THE SAW-WHET OWL

One day in April, a gentleman in Eastern Washington was taking a walk. He saw a hole in a stub and stopped to wonder if that was a door to a home. In a moment a little round face appeared at the door. Then the man looked through a crack into the stub and saw a little owl. It was the Saw-Whet Owl. He is difficult to find. His clothes are dark and he loves the deep woods.

Although the Saw-Whet Owl is about the same size as the Pygmy, the two birds do not look much alike. Pygmy is grayish brown and his head is striped, while a Saw-Whet is more olive in color and is streaked and marked with white and has white underparts.

DUSKY HORNED OWL

The Dusky Horned is very like the Western Horned Owl except that he averages larger and his color is very much darker. He is the big brown Horned Owl with the pretty white bib. He is much more common than the Western Horned Owl.

Sometimes the Horned Owls are great friends to the farmer and sometimes too fond of chickens.

It all depends upon how the food in a neighborhood introduces itself. If he finds plenty of rats, mice, chipmunks, etc., in the beginning, he is not apt to be troublesome to the chickens.

EARED OWLS

Owls have always been hard for me to find. About noon one hot sunny day, I was particularly favored. I found three beauties sitting together on a limb. They made no attempt to fly but they watched



Photo by W. L. Dawson

NEST AND EGGS OF LONG-EARED OWL

me closely. I walked round and round them but their big eyes were always upon me.

They were young Long-Eared Owls but they were full grown. I suppose they lived in the same nest or they would not have been so friendly.

Both the Long and the Short-Eared Owls deserve good names, for they are the farmer's friends. They make war upon mice, rats, other gnawing animals, and insects. The Eared Owls are large birds but they are smaller than the Horned Owls.

HORNED OWLS

The Horned Owls are fine looking big birds. When their wings are spread they look as large as Eagles. Indeed their extent of wings is almost as great as that of the Eagles.

Their reputation may not quite equal their beauty for they know very well the value of a good fat hen.

One of the prettiest Owls I ever saw paid a heavy price for his love of chickens the other day in a neighbor's yard. I could not help thinking, "What a sacrifice of beauty for just a hen." But the beautiful bird had to die—"he bit the chicken's head right off."

I have a friend who always has a good word for the birds. He says he likes chickens, too, but he does not think he

ought to be killed for it. What do you think about it, Children?

I went to my neighbor to beg the body of the Owl. The Owl's fine gray coat was flecked all over with white. There was a rich undertone of buff. Under his chin was a pretty white bib and on his head were two tufts of feathers which stood up like horns. This was the Western Horned Owl.

KENNICOTT SCREECH OWL

Although considered small for an owl, he is as large as a half-grown chicken. He appears large if we are thinking of Pygmy Owl and small if we compare him with the Horned Owls.

His evening song is not unpleasant. A good imitation of it can be made by short rapid whistles, or by blowing rapidly into a bottle.

One evening, the children found little Kennicott sitting upon a telephone post. They knocked him over and brought him to me. He appeared but little the worse for his adventure.

When any one approached him, he would hiss and snap, but finding this of no avail he became as gentle as a kitten, allowing himself to be handled as though he appreciated being caressed.

Kennicott's Screech Owl is here all the year.



KENNICOTT SCREECH OWL

The Great Gray Owl is a rare dweller of the deep forests.

Sometimes the beautiful Snowy Owl comes to us from the North. Sometimes he is nearly white but oftener he is more or less flecked with brown.

AN OUTING

There is probably no one who does not wish he were acquainted with the birds. But birds are so timid, their movements so rapid, that work among them is slow and difficult; however, with watchful eyes and patience we may all do something.

The place for an outing for lovers of birds is an open woodland on the shore of some body of water.

A wooded peninsula bordered on one side by a large beach and on the other by a tule marsh is an ideal place.

Here the upland birds meet the shore birds and the shore birds mingle their cries with those of the water birds.

Hanging from the tules are the homes of the Redwinged Black Bird and the Tule Wren. They are land birds.

The Killdeer and the Spotted Sand Piper deposit their eggs on the ground near the edge of the beach. In a tree in the slough, the Northwest Coast Heron makes his home. The Killdeer, the Heron and the Sand Piper are shore birds.

Like tiny rafts upon the water out among the tules are the homes of the Grebes. The Grebes are water birds.

I recall a certain small peninsula upon which I have spent many an hour with the little Spotted Sand Piper.

One or two pair come to this point every year. The first year I met them there, I hunted for five weeks for the nest, so easily do the birds fool us in our greener years. At last I gave up. The little spotted teetering things would lead me off the beach among the grasses, then raise their dainty wings and fly away over the lake, calling: "Wait, wait, wait." If I waited but a little while I could see them return, but only to repeat the game of fool.

One day I was walking over the point, paying no heed to the Pipers, when a little anxious parent darted across my path, saying, "See then, see then." I sat down and earnestly tried to "see then," but there was nothing interesting in sight except the little teetering mother who would not come quite to me.

Presently out of the corner of my eye, I saw a movement and, turning quickly, I found within a foot of where I was sitting a small depression containing three brown, striped, fluffy balls crouched close to the ground. The fourth had just started out to see the big world. Had it kept still, I might not have found the nest. The colors of the young are so much like the colors of the ground.

Sometimes I have watched and waited for an hour and a half for a parent to go to its nest that I knew must be hidden somewhere near, but the little bird was

too wise for that. It would hop upon a log, drop its head and go to sleep. Waking up and finding me still there, it would teeter awhile, run a piece, and then go to sleep again. This it repeated until it had exhausted my patience.



Photo by the Author
NEST OF SPOTTED SAND PIPER

Sometimes, I have flushed the mother bird and found four eggs spotted and blotched like the pebbles of the beach. Every little egg pointed downwards.

It is interesting to watch the mother bird lead the little ones from the nest into the big world. At our approach, the mother gives the alarm and the little ones squat instantly or "freeze" as we say. Watching closely, I have picked them up and returned them to the nest. They

were not afraid, they were too young to know fear but they were not too young to be obedient.

When the young are older, the mother's decoy is most beautiful. She runs almost to you, flies upward, circles low in the air and then drops. This she repeats several times. You can't help watching her. This is what she wishes you to do, for it gives the little ones plenty of time to run to cover. You will be a good hunter if you find them then.



NORTHWEST COAST HERON

NORTHWEST COAST HERON

All who have watched this long-necked, long-legged ungainly bird as he flew over the sloughs have noted that if the eye were taken from him but a moment he vanished. Where did he go? He simply

dropped out of sight among the bushes. It is useless now to try to locate him. He looks like the grasses and bushes.

Had we watched where he lit, we might see him standing stiff and tall watching for frogs or fish. Again he takes his position on the tops of the tallest firs. The big fellow looks awkwardly out of place upon the small branches. He is three feet or more tall, so he looks much like a big weather ^{cock} upon a 200 foot pole.

When the tide is out, he presents a queer appearance as he wades through the mud, deliberate, stiff-legged, grandfather style, his long necked curved, his eyes staring intently into the shallow water watching for fish or frogs.

We were camping upon the beach when one of these birds surveyed us curiously from a limb overhanging the beach a few yards away. He apparently did not know what the fire and smoke meant.

Not content with so distant survey, he flew low, in a semi-circle around us alighting upon the salal bushes which overhung the bank behind our ground table.

The salal could not hold a big bird like that. It gave way; he slipped and caught his toes fast in the bushes. This turned him upside down and he hung there. His long legs were in the air and his bill almost touched the ground.

He appeared as well satisfied to make

his observations in that position as right side up.

We laughed 'til we ached at the comical bird. I started to right him but my companion shouted, "Look out, he'll bite you"! I looked at his immense bill and thought perhaps he might. Then we got sticks. We thought we could turn him up with these. But they scared him; he struggled, freed himself, and went blundering right over our dinner, sadly imperiling our tea.

I was willing to sacrifice the tea for this excellent exhibition from this prince of blunderers, but my friend mourned for the tea.

The Indian pointed out a tall stub which stood a few rods back of our camping place. A big loose nest of sticks was on the top of this. They told us this had been Heron's home.

The Herons often colonize, placing their nests in the trees of dense sloughs.

NORTHWESTERN BELTED KING FISHER

Here is an excellent fisherman who never fishes for money. He uses his catch for the family table only. Any day in the year it is no surprise to the human fisherman to have this feathered angler beat him at the trade within a few rods of him.

From a branch or a telephone wire, King Fisher watches his chance, plunges into the water, and usually he brings up a fish. Sometimes he fails. Then he flies to a neighboring branch and comforts himself by singing. It sounds as though he were rattling trombones. He can rattle those trombones just as loudly as he flies as when he is sitting.

His home is well concealed. It is a tunnel which leads far into the bank at right angles to the stream. At the end of this he scoops out a depression for the eggs.

Once a followed this tunnel for six feet into the bank. At the end of this there were half a dozen birds. They were old enough to fly. We let all of them go but the one we wished to stand for his picture. We tried first to paint the mother bird, but she cried all the time; so we took her to the door; she rose in the air, circled around a few times as if to get her bear-

ings, and then went off in the direction of her scattered family.

The boys were angry. They said: "We ought to have killed them all! There won't be any trout left"! I watched the King Fishers closely after that and sure enough they did know the trout holes as well as the boys did!



NORTHWESTERN BELTED KING FISHER

We would not have them killed though, for that, for we like to live among them. If necessary, let us stock our streams with a few more trout so that the birds may live as well as we.

Besides, these are the famous Halcyon birds. Halcyon was the daughter of Aeolus, the God of the Winds. Her husband was drowned in the Aegean Sea. She was warned of this in a dream and

with a wild cry of terror she sprang from her bed and rushed to the sea, just in time to meet her husband's body as it floated to shore. In pity, the gods united Halcyon and her husband again, but changed them to birds.

Now, because Halcyon's father is god of the winds, during the brooding season the winds and waves are calm. We then have our "Halcyon days." Christian writers still weave the myth into song and story. The following is from Milton's Hymn to the Nativity:

Peaceful was the night
When the Prince of light
His reign of Peace upon this earth began
The winds with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kissed,
Whispering new joys to the wild ocean;
Which now hath quite forgot to rave
While birds of calm sit brooding on a
 charmed wave.

BUSH TITS

Do you see that band of little chattering mouse-colored birds in the willows by the lake shore? The tree is literally alive with them. They are about twice the size of humming birds.

They have no song worthy of the name but how they can talk! They work and play in flocks. They are clean little people. It is a treat to watch them go bathing. Their bath tub is often a tiny stream in a ravine. Talking all the while, they go down into the water in troops like a crowd of boys at the beach. When they come out, they fly to some near-by bushes, give themselves a few shakes, and then dry themselves in the sun. All the while, they keep up that lively chatter.

The nest interests people most. It is a deep pocket made of moss and lichens. It is eight or ten inches long and yet the builders are so tiny.

The opening is generally on the side near the top. Half a dozen white eggs may be found deep in this queer home. One would think the mother bird must find it lonely, dark and close, hidden away in that deep pocket! Why did she choose that style of architecture? Possibly she did it for protection for the nest looks like a big piece of moss that has fallen from a limb above. Might not that sometimes deceive a boy who would be inclined

to injure it? At least it is a good plan to deceive our robber Steller Jay. A boy could hardly have the heart to injure the nest if he once saw the tiny builders at work. Two little mates make it. They go after a load of moss together, talking lovingly of their work as they fly. They return together.



Photo by the Author
NEST OF BUSH TITS

The weaving is done from the inside. One worker sits upon a limb and waits. The other enters at the narrow door; then how that big pocket trembles while he works and weaves. Then he comes out and sits upon a limb to wait while the other one enters to weave. Then off they go for another load of moss and lichens.

Bush Tits are sociable, cheerful little companions. I have never seen them the least impatient.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH

This is just a little gray bird with black and white stripes on its head and its underparts tinted with red. It is about the size of chickadee.

For several years we followed a peculiar, penetrating little note before we could unite it with its owner. "Yank, yank, yank," it said, in a plaintive nasal tone. I could hear it among the stubs of the half logged districts. The singer, if such it could be called, was often as much as an eighth of a mile away.

Once I was watching Oregon Towhee guarding his nest in a brush pile, when "Yank, yank, yank," sounded nearer and nearer and Red-breasted Nuthatch flew past.

"So it is you," I thought, "whose language is: 'yank, yank, yank,' if you'll permit me, I'll follow you."

It visited a hole about eight feet from the ground in a stub. Nest architecture is a wonderful study! There are many tree dwellers but what other home is just like this!

Around that hole was a heavy broad ring of wax which the bird had plastered to the tree; perhaps to keep out unwelcome crawling insects.

This house was full of children so I

retreated and sat down to watch. Every five or ten minutes, one parent or the other came with food. Up and down the tree trunk, over and under the limbs, they hunted, walking upon the under side of the limb as easily as upon the top.

They were tremendous little workers—they had to be in order to bring up their family. By far the greater part of the food birds bring to their nests is insects.

Some of them, indeed, ask a part of our berries and cherries. Can we justly deny them! Let those who think so, come out into the world of work and song in the spring time and see.

CROSSBILLS

These little wanderers spend so much of their time so high in the hemlocks or other cone bearing trees that we may be neighbors to them for many years without knowing them.

I went to the foothills one June to meet them. Day after day I searched without finding them so I began to enquire; but the people were not acquainted with the inhabitants of the tree tops. They could hardly believe that crossed bills existed. One man answered my question by asking another: "But, Miss Getty, why is his bill crossed? Surely it can't be just to discommode him." Another said: "There ain't no sech birds!"

At last I found a woman who had really seen them. "O yes," she answered, "I have a farm farther in among the foothills. They are pugnacious little fellows. My boys used to catch them to see them fight."

The Crossbills were too high in the trees at that season, I could not study them. A few years after that, late in the year, they came farther into the lowlands where they fed upon hemlock seeds for several months.

One day, I heard a tiny "Weet, weet." They came low enough for me to see their

red coats. Both the Crossbill and the White-winged Crossbills were there. The White-winged are much the brighter colored. Both kinds were often found in the same flock but each species appeared to prefer the society of its own.

When I heard "Weet, weet," I always expected to find the White-winged Crossbills; the American talked more like the Siskins. Some people think they talk like little chickens.



WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL

They cling to the hanging cones while they pick out the seeds. The entire flock is often found on the same side of the tree or even on the same limb. Their pretty red coats contrast beautifully with their white wing bars. The females are yellowish green. Their queer crossed bills help them to twist the seeds from the cones.

There is a pretty story which the poets tell which gives another reason for the Crossed Bill. It tells us that this is the bird which tried to pull the nails from the Savior's cross and that as a mark of distinction, the bill remained crossed.

Jesus' blood dropped upon the little worker and dyed its feathers red.

The following is taken from Longfellow's poem: "The Crossbill."

"Stained with blood and never tiring,
With its bill it does not cease—,
From the Cross 'twould free the Savior,
Its Creator's Son release."

THE KILLDEER

The Killdeer is a plover who has given himself another name.

We were not as lucky finding Killdeer homes as we were finding Spotted Sand Piper homes. That was because Spotted Sand Piper lived near us and Killdeer loved the sloughs farther away. Who taught the birds to divide the land as they have! The sloughs near us are just as secluded as those they have chosen, yet year after year we go thirty miles to visit the Killdeer. The bird lover who visits all kinds of birds that belong to his state must travel many miles; for the feathered citizens are very exclusive in their choice of dwelling places.

Killdeer's nest may be pictured about the same as Spotted Sand Piper's: on the ground near water are four eggs. The small end of each egg always points downwards.

We found a pair of Killdeer near their slough last year. The male bird did his best to induce us to follow him. "Right this way, please!" he seemed to say.

The mother bird appeared to be terribly wounded. Indeed every bone in her little body seemed to be broken as she fluttered and rolled and tumbled there on the

ground exposing the beautiful rose color of her back which is usually concealed by outer feathers.

We could not half hunt with that picture before us. One would think an uncovered nest on the beach would be easily found, but we tramped over and over the place before we discovered the pebble colored eggs. There were but three in the nest and the number should have been four. Several rods away was a lone egg and no nest. We wondered if Jim Crow had carried it there leaving but three in our nest. So many nests of our little feathered friends come to grief.



Photo by W. L. Dawson

NEST AND EGGS OF KILLDEER

Killdeer is larger than Spotted Sand Piper. He has two dark bands across his breast and he wears a white collar. But why describe him! He'll tell you his name should you visit a favored slough: "Killdeer, Killdeer," and then as he stops and teters before you while he watches you curiously, you can describe him yourself.

WESTERN GOLDEN CROWNED KINGLET

We see parties of these Kinglet searching in the bark and branches of trees for insect eggs and worms. They are friendly little creatures and will let you come quite near. They chatter to each other all the while, "Se seep eep."

Their song opens in a high key and grows fainter as it runs down the scale. It is heard if you are lucky enough to find them at mating time.

Their nests may be any height from the ground, six to fifty feet, but are always hung on the underside of the limb, basket fashion.

They bring up two broods during the season.

This Kinglet is a small greenish bird with a flame colored crown. His wife wears a yellow crown.



Photo by the Author
NEST OF WESTERN GOLDEN CROWNED KINGLET

RUBY CROWNED KINGLET

Ruby Crowned Kinglet is olive green in color and his white wing bars, white circle around the eye and bright red crown patch, make identification easy. His wife and nestlings have no crown patch.

He is very friendly and will come almost to your hand to curiously inspect you.

He chatters pleasantly while hunting over the twigs for food. He holds himself perpendicularly in air with a humming bird like movement of the wings.

He places his nest high in the evergreens and it is very seldom found.



Photo by Dawson and Bowles

RUBY CROWNED KINGLET BASKETFUL



Photo by D. E. Brown
NEST OF SHUFELTD JUNCO

SHUFELTD JUNCO

These birds are commonly called "snow birds." They are beautiful and friendly little creatures.

They are dressed in grey with black head and neck, white bill and white outer tail feathers.

You usually notice them more in the winter time when flocks of them come to our doors to be fed, but they are with us all year.

They make their nests of grasses on the ground and lay from three to five spotted eggs.

VIRGINIA RAIL

You may put on your boots and go with me to the marshes. We will wade in, making enough disturbance so that Virginia Rail will know we have come and then we will stand very quietly here by this bunch of cattails.



Photo by D. E. Brown
NEST OF VIRGINIA RAIL

He is very shy but also very curious and soon he will come peeking out at us. Now you can see him, that slender brownish bird. Notice the black markings on

his back, and as he turns, see his white throat and cinnamon brown breast.

His long reddish bill must be a great help in getting bugs out of lily buds and see how his long toes help him to run across the grass and lily pads. He can swim as well as a duck, but with a sort of bobbing motion.

He makes a nest in a tussock of grass and lays from six to twelve eggs. The nestlings are glossy black.

“As thin as a rail” refers to this bird and not to fence rails. This slimness lets them slip through the grass and weeds.

A WOODLAND MEDLEY

There's a church by the Peaceful Ocean :
It was built by the Great Divine ;
For 'tis Peace and 'tis Love's devotion
That its evergreen walls enshrine.
There the birds lend their matchless voices
Thrush and Grosbeak are the choir—
While the sylvan chancel rejoices.
That the Robin's aflame with its fire.

From his pulpit the Vireo's calling—,
Hear him calling, "Spirit, come here!"
There's a prayer sweet cadenced falling
From the throat of the Hermit Thrush
near.

By his rush-rimmed font in the Plover,
Where the shadows of hemlocks creep ;
Where the dainty winged Gold Throats
hover
And the blushing Horned Grebes
plunge deep.

O, we'll come when these forests are glow-
ing ;
When the Orchards their censers swing ;
When the silver-rayed dogwoods are blow-
ing
O'er the many hued carpet of spring.

There'll be richly clad guests at the wedding

Of the Kinglet with golden crown :
With his green robed bride he'll be heading

The gay march of the clans in brown.

There'll come pretty Bluebirds, rose breasted

To the chimes which the lily-bell tells,
With the saucy Blue Jay, the Court Jester
Unencumbered by "Cap and bells."

There'll be sunkissed wee Warblers and
Finches

There'll be Black-birds with wings
aflame

To these nuptials, among the branches,
Of the birds with the royal name.

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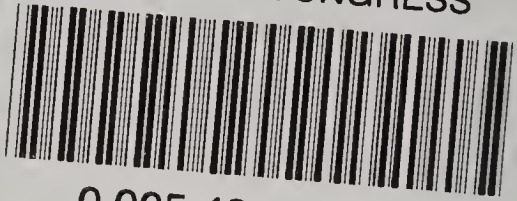
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